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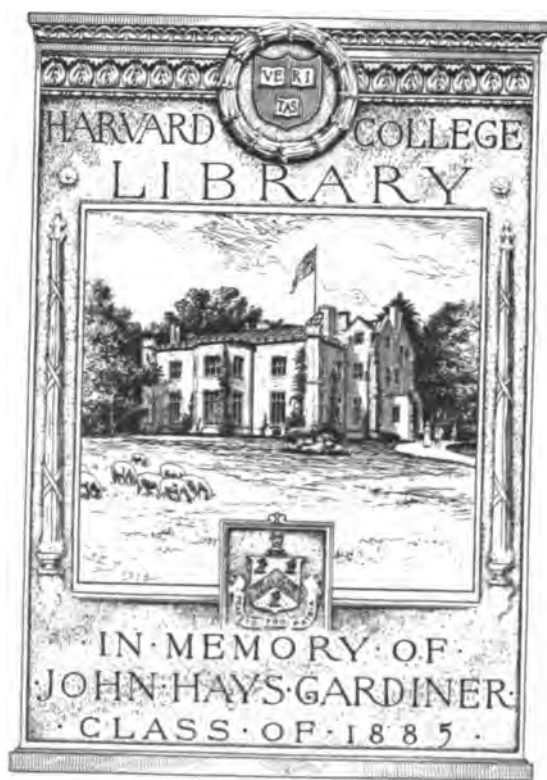
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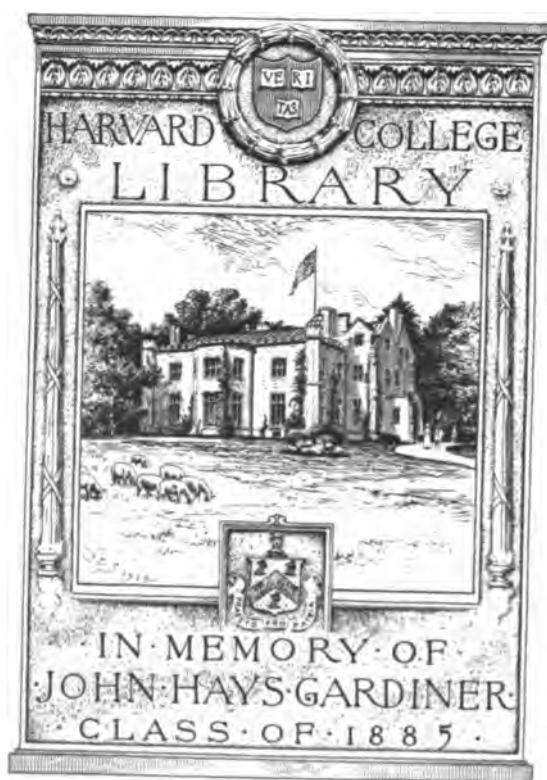
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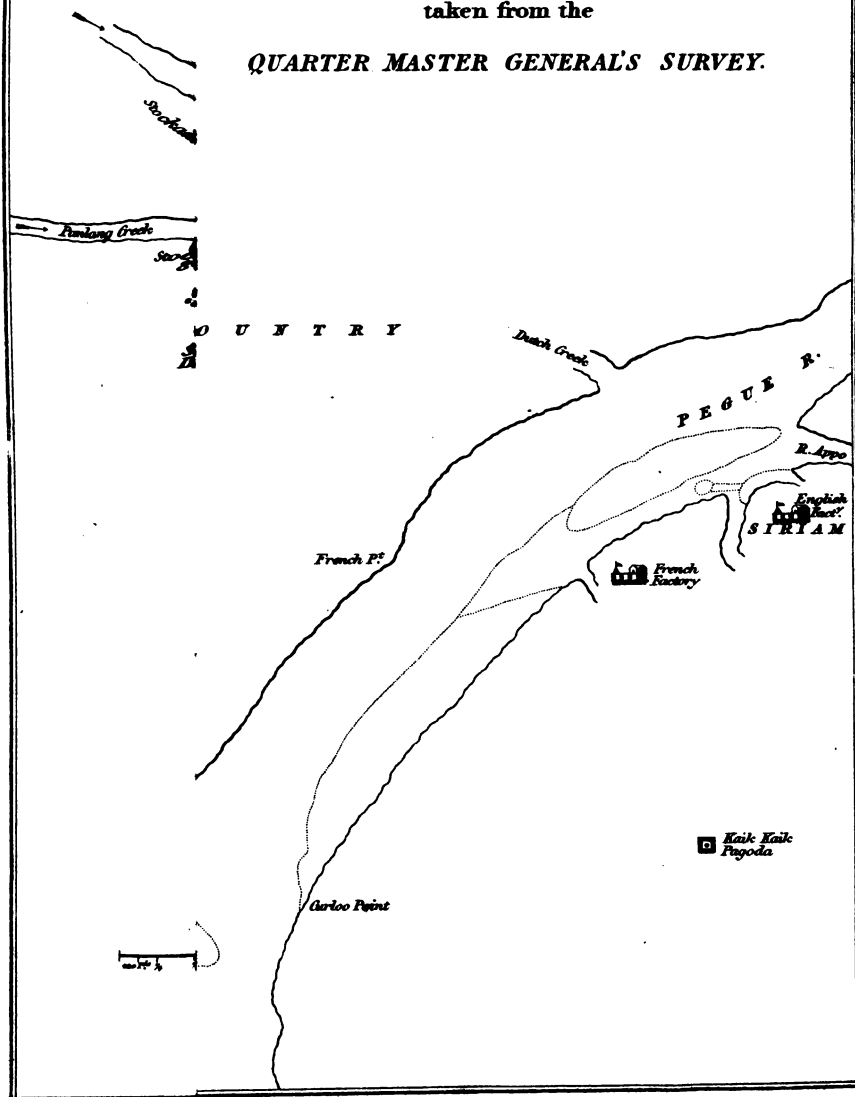




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M E M O I R
OF THE
EARLY OPERATIONS
OF
THE BURMESE WAR.
ADDRESSED TO THE
EDITOR OF THE UNITED SERVICE JOURNAL.

**PLAN OF THE
NEIGHBOURHOOD OF RANGOON**
*To accompany Lieu.^t Lister Maw's Memoir
taken from the
QUARTER MASTER GENERAL'S SURVEY.*



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M E M O I R

OF THE

EARLY OPERATIONS

OF

THE BURMESE WAR.

ADDRESSED TO THE

EDITOR OF THE UNITED SERVICE JOURNAL.

BY

H. LISTER MAW, LIEUT. R. N.

FORMERLY

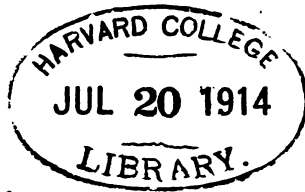
NAVAL AIDE-DE-CAMP TO MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, G.C.B. &c.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER, AND CO., 65, CORNHILL.

1832.

Ind 788.17



Gardiner fund

LONDON :

Printed by Maurice and Co., Fenchurch Street.

NOTE TO THE READER.

This account of the early Operations of the Burmese War was commenced as a Letter to the Editor of the *United Service Journal*. It has extended into a Memoir. Whether I am correct in publishing it, the Public must determine. Should it appear egotistical—for such is the nature of all memoirs—the reader must subtract accordingly. The only apology I can offer in either case, is, that the statements are true, and the intention not evil.

H. LISTER MAW.

*Junior United Service Club,
January, 1832.*

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MEMOIR,

&c.

TO THE

EDITOR OF THE UNITED SERVICE JOURNAL.

SIR,

THE number of your Journal for this month, January, 1832, commences after your annual preface, with a paper on the “Naval Operations of the Burmese War.” Your account, however, appears to me so far from doing justice to the Navy, whilst it is most unjust to Major, now Lieutenant-Colonel Snodgrass, that I feel it little less than a duty, from the peculiar position in which I was placed—that of a naval officer lent on ‘special service’ to the army—to endeavour to correct some of the errors into which you have fallen.

I shall premise, by stating my opinion, that Colonel Snodgrass’ work is by far the best that has

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been published relative to the Burmese war, although, unfortunately for the navy, he has confined it to a journal of the operations of Sir Archibald Campbell's army, speaking of that army as a body, whilst it has been received by the public as a general history of the war.

On its publication, remarks were made by various persons, and angry complaints by the navy ; I, for one, spoke to Colonel Snodgrass on the subject ; and his answer was, "That his work was a journal of Sir Archibald Campbell's army ; that he did not understand 'naval tactics ;' and that he thought some naval man had better publish an account of their proceedings ;" adding, however, "that the naval force employed was comparatively small ;" and, "you know that, at one time, you were the only naval officer doing duty at Rangoon."

This was all well and true, on the part of the Colonel ; but, the public having read and approved his work, it was scarcely probable that they would read and approve all, or any, of the nine hundred and ninety-nine accounts that might follow it ; and, consequently, the naval man, whoever he might be, that should undertake the task, would have an additional difficulty to overcome — to obtain a hearing.

As, however, the naval force, small as it really was, had never been wanting in exertion, but had, on the contrary, struggled hard to make up by energy, for the want of physical force and numbers,

it appeared but right that some one should make the attempt ; and, in consequence of representations that were made to me—the peculiar position in which I had been placed—and my desire to see the profession to which I had the honour to belong have fair play, I endeavoured, with the approbation of one of the then Lords Commissioners of Admiralty, to arrange some notes I had previously made for publication ; they were, however, prevented from being published by another official personage.

The account since published by Lieutenant Marshall, the naval biographer, is a valuable collection of extracts from Gazettes and other documents relative to the naval operations—through which, however, you have not followed him correctly—but, as it is not merely what the navy *did*, but the difficulties to which both they and the army—they more especially—were exposed, from want of previous information, properly organized resources, and efficient equipments—that requires to be understood, and which a person not upon the spot, and unacquainted with localities, could scarcely be expected to explain ; I will endeavour to set matters right upon some points, which may tend to remove those feelings of jealousy that still appear to exist.

One of the principal difficulties to which the Commodore and his squadron were exposed was the want of timely notice of their services being required, and of the nature of the resources against

which they were to act. The Burmese war, indeed, was one of those cases which have so disastrously proved the want of common geographical and political information, for there can be little doubt, that had the governor-general possessed a correct knowledge of the character and resources of the Burmans and their country, and with which it should have been the business of his council, or other local authorities, to supply him, much of the expence and difficulty of the war might have been avoided. As it was, a power of little more than half a century's growth had been allowed to arise and extend itself to the frontiers of our East Indian possessions, anxiously awaiting a favourable moment to attack, without the local government having obtained that knowledge of their resources, or even of their position, and the nature of their country, without which it is impossible for military operations, whether offensive or defensive, to be carried on so as to ensure success with economy. An individual of low origin—I believe a huntsman—having succeeded, by a concurrence of extraordinary circumstances, in placing himself at the head of two comparatively powerful tribes, or nations; and his successors conquering their neighbours, they arrived on the frontiers of the British possessions.

For a time the known prowess of the British forces checked their proceedings, but those disquiet and ambitious feelings that have at all times marked

the character of Eastern governments, not allowing them to remain quiet, no opportunity was lost of feeling their way.

About the commencement of the present century an expedition was sent by the Burmans, with hostile intentions, but was checked by a British division, under General Erskine, and induced to retire without a war. In 1818, when the Marquis of Hastings, as governor-general in India, was engaged in war with the Mahrattas, an attempt was again made by the Burmans, which was foiled by his policy. Resources had, however, been matured on the part of that restless people, and a favourable opportunity was alone wanting to commence hostilities. This opportunity appeared to them to be afforded during the interval between the Marquis of Hastings return to Europe, and Lord Amherst's arrival in India, to succeed him as governor-general.

At this period Commodore Grant, to whose ship I belonged, having gone the round of the more immediate important ports of his station, where he had much to effect in reducing establishments, &c., had proceeded to Penang, whence we returned, during heavy weather, to Madras. On making the light, we ran in at night to the anchorage, and found lying there his Majesty's ship Jupiter, of 50 guns on two decks, which had brought out Lord Amherst; the Marquis of Hastings having gone to Europe in his Majesty's ship Glasgow.

Whilst at Madras, the new governor-general was

informed that a misunderstanding had arisen between the Burmese and the British authorities ; he, therefore, sailed, on the following day, or the day after, for Calcutta, the seat of the supreme government.

In the course of a few weeks, Commodore Grant also sailed for Calcutta, to pay an official visit, as the superior naval officer in India to the governor-general. We had scarcely anchored in Saugor roads, when we were passed by three transports, filled with sepoy, going to reinforce the Chittigong frontier, the Burmans having commenced aggression. We were told, and I believe correctly, that the commodore, on arriving at Calcutta, offered the governor-general his services, and those of his ship, the *Liffey*, a frigate of 50 guns ; and the *Alligator*, a frigate-built ship, of 28 guns, which was also with him, to accompany, or go after the transports, and attend to this business ; but Lord Amherst, trusting to the information he had received, replied, that his object was merely to defend the frontier, and repel aggression, and that the sepoy would be sufficient.

The commodore having paid his visit, and a somewhat virulent fever breaking out on board the ship, we left Calcutta, and shortly afterwards being informed that a new eighty-four, the *Asia*, Sir Edward Codrington's flag-ship in the battle of Navarino, was ready for launching, we proceeded to Bombay, when the commodore was required by

the Company's agents to take charge of her. This was one of those awkward occurrences which tend to try an officer's judgment and character. The *Asia* had been built in less time than was anticipated, only a year before we had fitted out a frigate, the *Madagascar*, which was built on the same stocks, and the consequence was, that the commodore was without instructions, and almost without the means of fitting her out: whilst the agents represented that she would not be safe lying at the moorings in the harbour, they not being sufficient for such a vessel throughout the monsoon.

After anxious consideration and inquiry, the commodore deemed it his duty to attend to the agent's representations, and determined on fitting her out with his own ship's company, and turning over to her the officers and crew of his Majesty's sloop *Satellite*, who had completed their time of service, with invalids from the squadron, and such other men as he could spare and collect to convey her to England.

The *Satellite*, which was then cruising, was ordered round to Bombay to be sold; and no time was lost in getting the *Asia* ready. A new rigging warrant was drawn up for the occasion, taking in all such stores as could be spared from the *Liffey*; other stores were purchased; and a great part, even of the standing rigging, was manufactured by the *Liffey's* crew.

Whilst we were thus employed, a despatch

arrived overland from the governor-general, informing the commodore, that the sepoys had proved insufficient ; they were literally caught by Tartars, for such the Burmese are!—that he was under the necessity of sending more powerful expeditions, although the rainy season would soon commence, and requesting the commodore to render all the assistance in his power!

By this abrupt communication, the commodore and his squadron were absolutely stuck fast, and, notwithstanding his life was sacrificed by over exertion and anxiety, the squadron was never on a fair footing during the whole of the war, at least not whilst I saw it.

Little do those political economists, who call for reductions in our squadrons and establishments abroad, feel the difficulties to which commanders-in-chief are exposed on such occasions. Not long before, I had witnessed the effect of piracies in the West Indian seas, and here was the Burmese war about to involve not merely his Majesty's squadron, but the Indian government, and the welfare of the British Empire itself in difficulties which all the exertions of the *many* who were sacrificed, could barely overcome.

The commodore did all that an officer under such circumstances could do. He immediately sent off orders to such of his cruizers as could be met with, to go in and place themselves under the direction of the respective governments at Calcutta and

Madras; and having, by great exertions, got the Asia ready for sea, accompanied her for two days down the coast, and then made all possible sail to join the expedition.

Calling at Trincomalee, to replace some of the stores supplied to the Asia, and at Madras for information, we learnt that a division had sailed from the latter place a week before, but the wind being fair, and the Liffey sailing "well," we came up, and joined them at the rendezvous, Port Cornwallis, in the principal island of the Andamans.

I shall now pause, to give some account of the naval force that had been equipped by the Indian government for the expedition.

The establishment of the Honourable Company's marines in India precludes interference on the part of the officers of his Majesty's navy, even had the commodore not been otherwise engaged; whilst the great dislike which British seamen have, or then had, to entering the Company's marine, may have added to the difficulty; perhaps also, incorrect information as to what the expedition would have to encounter, misled those to whom the equipment was entrusted. But, whatever was the cause, it is certainly a fact, that the marine force specially collected and equipped for the expedition was uselessly expensive, and far from efficient.

In making such a statement, it may be only reasonable that a distinct account should be given of what this force consisted. Not having official

documents to refer to, I must content myself with speaking in round numbers, but in such a manner as to convey a correct general idea.

In the first place, the transports consisted of upwards of forty vessels, most of them large, 4, 5, 6, and even 800 tons burthen, strong, and good sailers; but manned, with the exception of one, (which was the agent's of transports' ship, the *Moira*,) by Lascars.

Next, were about twenty gun-brigs and schooners, averaging perhaps 60 tons each. These vessels had most of them been pleasure yachts on the Ganges, and were purchased expressly for the expedition, many of them were weak and old, but fortunately reached Rangoon in safety; they were manned by fifteen Lascars each, commanded by Europeans, and armed with two twelve-pounder carronades, and four swivels mounted on the bows and quarters. By some strange oversight these vessels went to Rangoon, unprovided with the necessary means of using their artillery; and taking them on the whole, they were *inefficient*.

Next to these, and which constituted by far the most effective part of the equipment, were about the same number of row-boats, which had formerly belonged to the pilots on the Hoogly. These were strongly built, and pulled and sailed well, rigged with fore and mizen lugs, and had each a twelve-pounder carronade in the bow.

Had these boats been manned by British seamen,

and had their sides afforded more shelter,—they were decked with little or no gunnel above the deck, the crew, when pulling, sitting on low stools,—they would have formed a force which all the marine power of the Burmans would not have been able to withstand.

As it was, they were manned by Bengalees, and it was worse than annoying to those who had charge of them to see the crews, when within range of the stockades, getting their boats purposely foul of each other without pulling, and thus exposing the troops embarked in them to the fire of the enemy without their having the power of acting. At such moments, coercion was the only means of bringing the Bengalees to a sense of their duty.

There were, indeed, two extremely opposite evils to which the naval officers serving at Rangoon were exposed, namely, to get the Bengalees on, and to keep the British seamen back! A small steam vessel, called the *Diana*, was purchased by the government, and proved of essential service, although her machinery more than once got out of order.

Besides the vessels and flotilla specially collected, several cruisers belonging to the Honourable Company's Bombay marine were attached to the expedition. These vessels were in general small, commanded by captains and lieutenants of the Bombay marine, and manned partly by Europeans and partly by Lascars. The great difficulty experienced

in obtaining a sufficient number of the former was a decided obstacle to their being made efficient as men-of-war; and even the Teignmouth, which was, I believe, as well manned as any of them, and the captain of which distinguished himself by his exertions during the war, had as many Lascars as Europeans. Their largest vessel, the Hastings, a frigate-built ship of about 600 tons, and which was ordered to be fitted out in consequence of the war, was manned partly by calashes, (natives,) to work her; a detachment of the Bombay European regiment, to act as marines; and another detachment of the Bombay artillery, also Europeans, to work the guns. Each of these parties considered themselves independent of the other, and did not agree; and the ship, whilst I saw her, was of little use. On her arrival at Rangoon, in consequence of representations made by the officers, the detachment of artillery was taken out of her, and attached to the army.

On the 4th of May, 1824, his Majesty's ship *Lifey*, bearing the broad pendant of the late Commodore Charles Grant, C.B., made her appearance off the harbour of Port Cornwallis, in the principal island of the Andamans.

The transports, under convoy of his Majesty's sloops *Larne* and *Sophie*, had most of them arrived, and were lying with signals flying and guns firing, forming a striking contrast to the solitary wildness of the forests that surrounded the anchorage, and presenting to the few wild miserable inhabitants

a bustle they had never before witnessed, and could not now comprehend.

On reaching the anchorage, we learnt that the cause of the guns and signals we had noticed whilst in the offing was a discrepancy between Captain Marryat, who was the senior naval officer present, and the masters of the transports, who, being unaccustomed to transport service, were not inclined to obey orders. It was, however, necessary, though not altogether easy, to convince the masters of their error, as any failure in this respect might have been ruinous to the expedition; and after two or three musters of them on board the *Liffey* in harbour, and during light weather at sea, the commodore's authority as naval commander-in-chief, added to the happy manner he possessed of convincing and influencing every one who served with him, produced the desired effect, and all went on well.

It may here not be amiss to mention a circumstance which, though trifling in itself, tends to shew what was, even at this time, the general opinion and want of information relative to the nature of the service on which we were going. During our call at Madras we had received letters on board for various officers belonging to the expedition, and, on anchoring, the commodore thought proper to send me round to find the different ships, and deliver these letters. Of course, in so doing, I conversed with numerous officers relative to the all-engrossing subject of the time—the service we were employed on.

Not one had even a tolerable idea of what we afterwards found to be the case; whilst the general opinion and complaint was, that there would be nothing to be done in a war from which many of them never returned!

On the 5th, we weighed and stood out from the anchorage; but, by the time the transports were all outside, the wind fell light, occasionally almost calm, and we did not lose sight of the island until the next evening.

On the 6th, his Majesty's ship *Slaney* joined the convoy, having been detained by some vessels belonging to the Madras division which were bad sailers. She was detached the same day with a division against *Cheduba*; and the Honourable Company's cruiser *Mercury* was sent with two transports to *Negraïs*.

The principal convoy, consisting of about forty sail of transports, under his Majesty's ships *Liffey*, *Larne*, and *Sophie*, and having on board, I believe, about 6000 troops, Europeans and Sepoys, with artillery and stores, was now fairly under weigh.* The wind freshened. On the 8th we had strong breezes, and on the 10th anchored safely inside the bar of the *Rangoon* river; the only accident during

* The total force embarked was 8700; but detachments were sent to *Cheduba* and *Negraïs*: and although I have no document to refer to, from the recollection of what was reported at the time, I do not think the force embarked in the *Liffey's* convoy exceeded 6000 men.

the passage having been, that the steam-vessel was run foul of by a transport in the night, and one of her paddles damaged, in consequence of which the Liffey took her in tow.

About this time a circumstance occurred that gave the Burmans notice of the expedition, and which, had it not been for the commodore's promptness, would have enabled them to make preparations with fire rafts, &c. and, as they attempted to do, to sink vessels in the narrows of the river.

Amongst the vessels prepared for the expedition at Madras, was one which had been used for weighing anchors that ships might have slipt from in bad weather, and which was now laden with chains intended for securing booms to protect the transports from fire rafts, but which proved to be useless. She was very strongly built, and sailed very badly, and soon after leaving Madras parted from the convoy. The master, who was more of a logician than a tactician, arguing that he should not be able to come up again in sailing, and that by going to the rendezvous he should increase his distance, determined on sailing directly for Rangoon, and arrived inside the bar of the river the day before the expedition.

On anchoring, he was boarded by a Burmese Custom House officer, who was not a little surprised at his cargo, and of course entered into an investigation. Whilst this was going on, however, his Majesty's ship *Larne*, which had also separated from the convoy on the passage from the rendezvous, ran

in and was hailed by the Burmese officer in a great rage, to anchor, but going on board and finding her a man of war, his investigation was ended, and he endeavoured to escape.

The Sarang, the native boatswain of the chain vessel, was taken out by the Burmans, and was for many months a prisoner amongst them. He saved his life by asserting a falsehood, and persisting in it, and he afterwards made his escape.

On the eleventh (not the seventeenth) of May, the commodore having given his final instructions to the captains of the men of war, and masters of the transports, and Sir Archibald Campbell being then on board the Liffey, we weighed, and about 10 A. M. being the first of the flood tide, stood up the river with the wind nearly aft.

After proceeding for about an hour—the Liffey under easy sail, the transports carrying more in proportion to their various rates of sailing—a squall with heavy rain came on. We reduced our canvass, lowering the topsails and hauling up the foresail, but continued standing on. In a quarter of an hour the rain cleared off, and we were shortly after fired at from a chokey on the starboard—(right going up)—bank of the river. The shot was harmless, passing close a head of the Liffey, and falling under the quarter of a row boat that was on her larboard bow.

About this time we got sight of the great Shoe Dagon Pagoda standing on an eminence surrounded by trees. It presented a most splendid appear-

ance; being, as we thought, much the size and shape of St. Paul's, and entirely gilt; as we reconnoitered, it we congratulated ourselves that at least it could not be with savages we were going to contend!

Our attention was, however, soon called from this object.

We were shoaling water, keeping scarce the ship's breadth from the larboard bank, and there was an appearance of movements on the river a-head to oppose our passage.

Orders were given to beat to quarters.

I will not here enter into a detail of the zeal and ability which in a fifty-gun frigate without a pilot—for a Portuguese lad we had on board could not be called one, and was scarcely attended to—led forty sail of transports twenty miles up an unknown river, through a narrow winding channel. Those who may have been placed in similar circumstances will know that powder and shot are at such moments secondary considerations. Those who are unacquainted with naval affairs may judge, when they are told, that, after we got possession of Rangoon, and found there regular pilots, out of each half dozen vessels that arrived and came up singly, with these pilots on board, one or two generally got on shore, whilst, with the commodore, the only vessel that grounded was his Majesty's sloop *Larne*, and she was supposed to have the only tolerable pilot on board.

About one o'clock we 'came to,' off Rangoon,

a-breast of the King's Wharf, on which was the principal battery, and, furling sails, again beat to quarters. It was the wish of the commodore, and, I believe also, of the general, not to use force until absolutely required; and even after the Burmese commenced firing, only two of the carronades were fired, by way of shewing them our thirty-two pounders; which not being immediately answered, the commodore gave orders to pipe to dinner: the men had, however, scarcely got below when the Burmese again commenced, and a few more guns were fired. Our unfortunate opponents, if such they ought to be called, probably mistaking forbearance for weakness, went on firing; and the commodore's patience being exhausted, and the men having got their grog, and swallowed it at the tub, we commenced firing broadsides. In a few minutes, every thing in and about the battery was shot through and through; some of the enemy's guns were split, or dismounted; and at the third broadside, as we afterwards learnt, the Burmese authorities left the town. As they were rushing out of the farther gate, a long twenty-four pounder, that had been too much elevated, cut down a tree, and added to their consternation, fancying they should not be able to get out of range.

About 3 p. m. the signal was made for the troops to land, which they did in three divisions, above, below, and in the centre of the town, led by the men-of-war's boats. Opposition had been expected here,

and had any been made it might have been effective : all was however quiet, the town being deserted ; and by four o'clock the troops were in possession, with British colours flying on the Burman flag-staff, hoisted by Lieut. S. Thornton of his Majesty's ship *Liffey*.

Immediately on taking possession of the town, the *Liffey's* boats were despatched up the river, to destroy fire-rafts, and remain a-head of the shipping during the ebb tide. Numbers of unfinished fire-rafts were found, and destroyed, affording sufficient proof that the Burmans had not been idle, and that, had the commodore been less prompt in bringing the expedition up the river, another tide would not have been allowed to pass, without attempts being made to destroy the transports, or prevent the passage, for, at the time the *Liffey* and her convoy made their appearance round the point nearest to the town, they had got two brigs under way, to sink in the narrows of the river, and were only prevented from effecting their purpose by the one lowest down getting on a bank, and the other being too high up the river.

On the 15th, the Honorable Company's cruizers, *Hastings* and *Teignmouth*, arrived. The *Hastings* was in a few days ordered to *Cheduba*, to relieve his Majesty's ship *Slaney*.

For several days after the taking of Rangoon, the boats of his Majesty's ship *Liffey* were sent up the river to look out for war-boats, and to be ready

a-head of the shipping, in case any attempt should be made with fire-rafts during ebb-tides. On these occasions, they were repeatedly fired at from behind breastwork stockades that surrounded villages, especially from one called Kemendine, which we afterwards learnt was the depôt or rendezvous of the crews of the emperor's war-boats, and who were picked men. The orders were, not to land, in order, if possible, to prevent collision, and induce the inhabitants to render assistance to the expedition, as the government and leaders of the expedition had been led by Major Canning, the political agent, to suppose they would do, or at least to remain quiet. As, however, forbearance only encouraged them in aggression, inasmuch as they had the advantage in being sheltered by their works, whilst our men were exposed in the boats, several got wounded, the commodore communicated with the general on the subject, and it was, at length, determined to send a force to destroy them.

Before day light on the morning of the sixteenth, the grenadiers of his Majesty's 38th, Sir Archibald Campbell's own regiment, were embarked in six row-boats, of which I had charge, being the first time I did duty with the army, and accompanied by the boats of his Majesty's ship Liffey, under the command of Lieutenant Wilkinson, second-lieutenant of that ship, proceeded to the stockades.

The grenadiers embarked, that morning, a hundred and five strong. From what I saw whilst at Rangoon,

and have since heard, I do not suppose five of them survived the war, and I believe I am at this moment the only officer living.

The Liffey's men had determined amongst themselves, that, if ever they should be permitted to visit these works, they would repay the Burmans for the wounds their messmates had received whilst in the boats, and an opportunity was now afforded them.

A small stockade was first taken, the village burnt, as an example, and ten or twelve of the enemy killed. We then proceeded to the war-boat men. It was the first time they encountered a British force at close quarters, and I suspect they have not yet forgotten it.

Immediately on getting into fire, the Liffey's crew cheered, and pulled directly up for the works; whilst the soldiers were prevented, by the unfortunate, but rascally Bengalees, from being equally quick. The seamen, however, did not wait to be supported, but, rushing and scrambling over the works, were instantly hand to hand with the Burmans. Unfortunately for the latter, they did not understand the sailors rusty jackets, but, probably taking them for an inferior force, stood to gain, by dire experience a better acquaintance with 'British seamen.' They however stood well, until, the soldiers landing, they were compelled to give way, and were driven by the sailors into the jungle.

Two anecdotes may be mentioned here, which

though perhaps in themselves trifling, tend to shew the respective characters.

As the seamen were driving the Burmans towards the jungle, one of the latter, who, from his arms, was probably a chief, was chased by an Irishman, belonging to the Liffey's launch, armed with a boarding-pike. The Burman, seeing only one man near him, turned to fight, and raised his double-handled sword, for the purpose of cutting down his opponent: the Irishman, however, fancying there was room on the sword handle for more hands than the chief's, seized that part of it which projected towards him with his left hand, and run the Burman through the body by his right.

About the same time, some other 'blue-jackets,' finding that the principal part of the fighting was over, caught two horses, which happened to be in the stockade, and mounted, to 'have the benefit' of a ride, the horses being, in their opinion, prize property.

As to the wretched Bengalees in the row-boats, of whom I had that morning the *felicity* to have charge, whilst my shipmates were carrying all before them, they would do nothing but cry 'Yally, Yally:' and such was the conduct of my own crew, that whilst I was in the act of firing the boat's twelve-pounder carronade, loaded with grape, so as to bear in some measure on the enemy's flank, they got foul of another boat, which altered the direction of the gun,

and its contents were all but discharged upon our own people. It was not until I had applied the point of my cutlass to two of them, that I could get them to pull up to the works.

In this affair Lieutenant Kerr of the 38th was shot through the heart as he was endeavouring to get on shore ; and Lieutenant Wilkinson was shot through the thigh : one private of the grenadiers was killed, and nine wounded, and the Liffey had at this time, including the previous skirmishes in the boats, seven men severely wounded, of whom one subsequently died. But it is not so much my intention to enter minutely into these details, as to endeavour to render justice to all parties, by relating such circumstances as may shew the nature of the service on which they were employed, and their peculiar modes of acting.

About fifty of the enemy were killed, the position was burnt, and a paper, written in the Burmese language, stuck up, informing the natives that all villages which fired on British subjects would be destroyed in a similar manner, but promising protection to such as should remain quiet.

Lieutenant Wilkinson, on being wounded, was removed into one of the smaller boats, but still accompanied us ; and Lieutenant M'Ilwaine, junior lieutenant of the Liffey, who was also present taking charge, proceeded with credit to himself and efficiency to the service.

A third stockade was taken, the enemy retreating before us, and we returned to Rangoon.

I now proceed to an affair, of which, as being attached to the general's staff, I was a witness, although the navy were not engaged, and which tends to shew, that, notwithstanding the gallant conduct of the British seamen, the British soldiers were not behind them.

The first force the Burmans could collect to make a stand, or commence offensive operations, after the taking of Rangoon, was about seven thousand men, supposed to have come from Prome, the chief or general of which, to whom we commonly, but erroneously, at the time, gave the title of the 'Prince of Prome,' fixed his head-quarters at a village called Juayhyvaug, or Johazong, being on the edge of a jungle, that skirted a plain, and about nine or ten miles distant from the British lines.

From this position he advanced his posts, until parties of his men got under cover of the jungle, almost to the British posts, whose picquets they harrassed, especially during the night: the intention of the Burman, probably, was to surround our lines with detached stockades, which, previous to the war against the British forces, were considered impregnable; and, according to the Burman mode of warfare, to cut off our supplies, or, as he perhaps thought, means of escape. The time had, however, arrived, when he was to learn the futility of such

proceedings; for, on the evening of the 27th of May, Colonel Snodgrass, on riding round the lines, came to a picquet of his Majesty's 38th regiment, when a party of the enemy were shewing themselves in its front. He immediately directed the officer to charge, and himself accompanying, they succeeded in driving the enemy from a small stockade, having only three of the picquet wounded.

This circumstance being reported to Sir Archibald Campbell, he determined on going himself to 'feel his way,' and the following is the account given in his despatch, published in the Calcutta Gazette of Monday, July 5th, 1824; to which I shall add some circumstances that came under my immediate notice.

Extract from Sir Archibald Campbell's Despatch.

May 28th.—“From the precautions which the enemy on the preceding evening appeared to have adopted for the defence of the road above alluded to, I felt convinced it must lead to grounds which it was intended we should not approach; I therefore, on the morning of the 28th, left camp with four companies of Europeans, from his Majesty's 13th and 38th regiments, 250 sepoy, and one gun and a howitzer, from the Bengal artillery.

“On approaching the stockade taken on the previous evening, we found it re-occupied, but only a few shots were fired from it, wounding one man of the 13th regiment. About a mile further

“ on, we came upon two more stockades, admirably
 “ constructed upon well chosen ground, not quite
 “ finished, and abandoned by the enemy, all of
 “ which were destroyed. Continuing to advance
 “ through a thickly wooded country, we observed,
 “ at every opening in the road, parties of the re-
 “ treating enemy, beyond the reach of our mus-
 “ quetry, but some excellent practice was made
 “ with round-shot and shrapnells by the artillery.
 “ After marching, in this manner, seven miles from
 “ camp, I found the attillery soldiers quite ex-
 “ hausted with fatigue, and was under the necessity
 “ of sending back the guns, escorted by the Native
 “ Infantry, having determined to advance with
 “ the four companies of Europeans as far as a large
 “ plain, which, my guide informed me, was then
 “ only a mile distant ; at length, the road did de-
 “ bouche from the jungle into an extensive valley
 “ of Paddy-fields, (already some inches under
 “ water,) at the end of which, two miles distant,
 “ stands the village of Juayhyvaug, where im-
 “ mediately I observed quantities of smoke, as if
 “ arising from a concourse of people cooking, and
 “ concluded that the long-desired object of re-
 “ leasing the wretched inhabitants from the hands
 “ of their cruel tyrants was now within my reach.
 “ The rain fell in torrents, but I pushed on with
 “ my small party, confident of victory, should the
 “ enemy meet us in the field ; which I flattered
 “ myself was intended, from seeing their generals

“ drawing out a long line in the rear of the village,
 “ flanked by impenetrable jungles.

“ Our advance was by echelon of companies,
 “ left flank leading direct for the village of Juayhy-
 “ vaug, close to which a heavy fire was suddenly
 “ opened upon us from two stockades, so well
 “ masked, as not to be distinguished from a garden-
 “ fence, even at the short distance of sixty yards.
 “ Not a moment was to be lost. I ordered Briga-
 “ dier-general Macbean to keep the plain with the
 “ light company, outflanking the stockades and vil-
 “ lage, and keeping the enemy's line in check;
 “ while the other three companies, led by that gal-
 “ lant soldier, Major Evans, of the 38th regiment,
 “ at the head of the two flank companies of his regi-
 “ ment, and Major Dennie of the 13th light infan-
 “ try in like manner at the head of a company of
 “ his regiment, destined for the attack, on the order
 “ being given, rushed forward to the assault, with
 “ an intrepidity and gallantry I have never seen
 “ surpassed; and in less than ten minutes, the first
 “ stockade was carried, and cleared of the enemy at
 “ the point of the bayonet, many escaping into the
 “ thick jungle in the rear. The troops then moving
 “ out, formed up for the attack of the second work,
 “ with a coolness and regularity which only an
 “ eye-witness could sufficiently appreciate. The
 “ second stockade, resolutely and obstinately de-
 “ fended, was carried in the same gallant style;
 “ the garrison, within, fighting man to man, was put

“ to the bayonet: many escaped to the jungle in
 “ the rear; but those who fled to the plain, met a
 “ similar fate with their comrades within, from the
 “ company under Brigadier-general Macbean, who
 “ allowed few to pass; he took no prisoners.

“ The disadvantages, under which the attack was
 “ made, considered, the heavy fall of rain, and the
 “ strength of the three companies, commanded by
 “ Captains Piper and Birch, of the 38th, and Cap-
 “ tain Macpherson of the 13th regiment, not ex-
 “ ceeding in number 200 men, carrying by assault
 “ two formidable stockades, defended by six or
 “ seven times their force, and that, in the face of
 “ what I have since ascertained to be the main body
 “ of the enemy in this part of the country, amount-
 “ ing to about 7000 men, I need not, I trust,
 “ endeavour to speak in praise of the gallant band
 “ I had that day the honour to command. Indeed,
 “ I feel that nothing I might say, could, in adequate
 “ terms, do them justice. Every man appeared to
 “ feel and act as if the honour of his country, and the
 “ success of the enterprize, depended upon his own
 “ personal conduct and exertions. The enemy left
 “ 300 dead in the stockades and adjacent fields, and
 “ I hope the nature of the contest will not admit of
 “ our loss being considered great, although some
 “ valuable officers and men have been lost to the
 “ service; among whom I have, to regret Lieuten-
 “ ant Alexander Howard, of the 13th Light Infan-
 “ try, killed; and Lieutenants Michel and O’Hal-

“loran; of his Majesty’s 38th regiment, very severely wounded, each having since lost a leg by amputation.

“After carrying the stockades, I drew up my small force and remained an hour in front of the Burmese army, which, even then, although late in the day, and ten miles from home, I would have immediately attacked, had I seen any prospect of bringing them to action; but a forward movement on our part, at once, satisfied me of their intention to retreat into the jungle, had we approached them.”

At the time the firing was so suddenly commenced upon us from the masked stockades, I happened to be amongst some skirmishers who were thrown out on the left flank, and there being, as Sir Archibald says, “no time to be lost,” those who were nearest, scarcely waiting for orders, rushed through the abattis to one of the entrances of the first stockade, where the Burmans stood to receive us.

You, Sir, or the writer of your article, ridicules the “leonine expression” of the Burmans. I question however, without in the least doubting his or your courage, whether, had you been present, you would have ridiculed their expression on this occasion; I do not ridicule the recollection,—but to proceed:—one of the soldiers who was before me, was endeavouring to get in, and I had my hand on his back or shoulder, pushing him forward, and

telling him to get up, for 'we must get in,' when, he was shot; an 'amiable looking' Burman was at the same time taking aim at my head, with a spear of sundry yards length, and away flew one of the Liffey's flat topped caps out of my immediate sight, whilst another soldier, shoving his head over my shoulder, was shot through the head! One soldier and myself then remained, and the Burmans were doing their utmost to get rid of us, when up came Lieutenant, now Captain Trant, with a reinforcement, and making a spring to get in, fell at the trenches, which was probably the means of saving him from being speared. However, we got in, and, as Sir Archibald has said, in less than ten minutes the enemy were cleared out 'at the point of the bayonet.' The second stockade was carried much in a similar manner. Howard was killed, and Michel and O'Halloran wounded, I believe much about the same time, and near together. Howard was said to have killed the man who killed him. Michel was shot through both legs, and died, after having had one amputated. O'Halloran, who lost his leg above the knee, is, I believe, since dead.

I was standing next to O'Halloran at Kemen-dine, when a grenadier came up, and told us of Kerr's being killed: on hearing it, he was much affected, and seeing that he was so, I endeavoured to introduce a little nautical philosophy, of 'the fortunes of war,' and 'such things must happen.'

“Ah!” said he, “it’s very well for you to talk so, but *I have lost a friend!*” Poor fellow! here he was, in less than a fortnight, crippled, almost before he had arrived at manhood, for, although tall, I do not suppose he was more than eighteen.

Besides these officers, two rank and file were killed; and two serjeants, one bugler, and twenty-four rank and file wounded, of whom the bugler and three privates died, before the despatches were sent off. On this day, Colonel Snodgrass performed the duties of a cool, able, active officer.

Sir Archibald Campbell was reprimanded by Sir Edward Paget, as commander-in-chief in India, for exposing himself personally;—and his (Sir Archibald’s) remark on the occasion, was, “That whenever, or wherever, he could find the enemy within his reach, they should not be long without receiving a visit from himself or his troops;” and I never heard that he broke his word during the war. He had seen service in the Peninsula, from Corunna to Napoleon’s abdication.

Now, Sir, without any thing like vehement feelings, or evil intentions, I will ask you, or your readers, whether the following paragraph, taken from your paper, at page 16, is just or candid?—whether it is calculated to remove those apparent traces of jealousy, that still, unfortunately, exist between the two services.

United Service Journal, No. 38, p. 16.

“ We are inclined to think that the gallant
 “ Major—i. e. Lieut.-Col. Snodgrass—is impressed
 “ with a higher notion of the numbers and prowess
 “ of the Burmese than can be justly ascribed to
 “ them from the facts before us. Hidden within
 “ stockades and jungles, we marvel how their forces
 “ were so accurately counted; and we consider the
 “ strength and ability of the foe to be greatly over-
 “ rated. From public records, and much conversa-
 “ tion upon these heads, we should pronounce that
 “ the chief difficulties which were to be surmounted
 “ arose from the semi-barbarous habits of the enemy,
 “ the debilitating site, the want of refreshments, and
 “ the being unprovided to meet such customs and
 “ climate. In every item of positive intrepidity,
 “ discipline, and military resource, the chiefs were
 “ found deficient; and their followers were abund-
 “ antly given to flight. As to the noisy vaunt of
 “ cheering our men towards their stockades, and
 “ the infatuated desperation with which a few Bur-
 “ mese, despairing of quarter, fought under grim
 “ and leonine distortions of visage,—such cannot be
 “ called courage. ‘Valour,’ says Sancho, ‘is the
 “ mean between the two extremes of rashness and
 “ cowardice,’ a medium unknown to these people,
 “ or their cognate allies: and we have consequently
 “ seen that, hitherto, every attack had almost instant
 “ success, save one,—and that exception is easily
 “ accounted for. The size of the men has been

“greatly dwelt upon; but they failed in agility, and have been represented to us to be as heavy as so many fattened ogres.”

I know not, Sir, who is your informant, but you must excuse me for remarking that there is at least a considerable degree of uncertainty in the apparent meaning of the early part of your paper, inasmuch as, notwithstanding this extraordinary paragraph, when speaking of the “brave conduct of Captain Marryat and his lads” at “the dashing affairs in the Dalla Creeks,” you state that “finer or more characteristic traits of British soldiers and sailors were never witnessed.” I may have occasion to notice the “Dalla Creeks” by and by.

On the 29th, one of the picquets in front of the Great Pagoda was fired on from the jungle, when the light company of the 38th regiment were ordered to advance, under the command of Captain Piper. They came upon a stockade, and carried it, killing twenty-one of the enemy, and having only five men wounded.

General Macbean had been detached at daylight, with two regiments and some camel howitzers, to the place where the enemy had been fallen in with the day before. They were not seen, and some strong works were found evacuated.

On the same day a brigade was sent, under Colonel Godwin of his Majesty’s 41st regiment, to Siriam, when the boats of the squadron co-operated. The enemy retreated as we advanced, and the only

effect produced was, that a royal war-boat, pulling fifty-four oars, and entirely gilt, was found and brought away.

On the 31st, his Majesty's ship *Liffey* left Rangoon, it being evident that a vessel of her class could not proceed up the river, and her presence not appearing to be at that time requisite at the town, whilst it might be required elsewhere. Moreover, the attack on the commodore's health, which shortly after terminated in his death, had already reduced him to a state of debility, and he therefore proceeded to Penang, leaving Captain Marryat, with his Majesty's sloops *Larne* and *Sophie*, to carry on the duty as senior naval officer at Rangoon.

About this time, the Hon. Company's cruizer *Mercury* arrived with the detachment sent against *Negrais*, having found it impracticable to establish a post on that island.

In the early part of June a second detachment arrived from Madras, under Colonel Miles of his Majesty's 89th regiment; and, towards the middle of June, Brigadier M'Creigh rejoined from *Chebuba*, having captured the *Rajah* or native chief of the island, and left a detachment of sepoys in possession.

Speaking of the affair at *Kemendine* on the 3d. of June, you say—"Although this was a failure—and
 "a failure owing solely to the flotilla not being
 "under the command of Captain Ryves, the senior
 "naval officer on the spot,—it gave an opportunity

“ to the pinnaces of the *Larne* and *Sophie* to storm
 “ a small stockade, though with a loss of fifteen
 “ killed and wounded.”

Sir, one part of this is not just ; nor do I think the other is correct. During the time I was acting as naval aide-de-camp, one of those reports which are sometimes so *kindly* and so safely circulated, reached the late Captain Alexander, who, on his arrival at Rangoon, asked me—thinking perhaps that, from the position in which I was placed, I should have further means of observing, or be less influenced by party feeling—“ how Captain Ryves had got on ? ” and particularly referred to this affair. I immediately, as in duty and honour bound, repelled the insinuation ; and declared, that Captain Ryves had, on every occasion that I witnessed, acted as became an officer of his rank in his Majesty’s service, and had been most active on this occasion ! In like manner, Sir, I now deny the charge brought against Sir Archibald Campbell. Although a naval aide-de-camp, I am no advocate for generals taking command of squadrons—not even for Sir Archibald ; but if this was a failure proceeding solely from a misapplication of the naval force, why did not Captain Ryves personally inform Sir Archibald of his error ? Had I been aware of it, I should not have hesitated one instant to have done so ; although I was, perhaps, where I ought not to have been—in a gun-boat opposed to a gun in the enemy’s position, that was cutting up a detachment of the 41st, and which we

at length succeeded in silencing: indeed, I believe we were all tolerably busy, and no one more so than Captain Ryves, who was firing with great rapidity from the Honourable Company's cruizer *Thetis*, the commander of which had been mortally wounded.

As to the two British columns being taken for Burmese, and accordingly fired on, I believe some shot having too great a range did reach them; and as the *Thetis* was one of the closest, if not the closest vessel in, and was most active in firing, she was most likely to have done the damage. The stockade was between my gun-boat and a British column. But the truth, I suspect, is, that the principal position, which was the head-quarters of the Burmese force, proved stronger than was anticipated; and the columns being sepoys, did not understand storming quite so well as British troops.

This affair was not, however, altogether a failure; for, in addition to the small stockade taken by the pinnaces of the *Larne* and *Sophie*, a long line of works, extending along the bank of the river, were carried by a detachment of his Majesty's 41st regiment, under Major Chambers.

As to the conduct of Lieutenant Fraser of the *Larne*, and Mr. Goldfinch of the *Sophie*, who was wounded, I can from personal knowledge add my testimony, if it be worth having, of their very gallant and able conduct on many occasions besides the present.

Referring to the 10th of June, you say—"Two

“ of the eighteen-pounders, however, soon formed
 “ a sufficient breach, the word was given, and the
 “ position was ours.” This was one of the few
 instances in which we were enabled to effect a
 breach; but, notwithstanding the abattis you men-
 tion did not exist, the business was not so briefly
 settled as you describe.

When the breach was made, the Burmans stood
 in the trenches, heaving earth into the breach to fill
 it up, whilst the eighteen-pounds shot were going
 in amongst them; and when the Madras European
 regiment, led by a party of volunteers, was ordered
 up to storm, they were checked, faced to the right,
 and commenced firing. Sir Archibald, seeing that
 delay might be injurious, ordered a detachment of
 the gallant 41st to storm, which they did under
 Major Chambers, and carried the stockade, but not
 before the Major had been speared through the
 cheek and the upper part of the palate, of which,
 I understand, he is since dead.

The Burmese chief who was killed had been at Ran-
 goon only the day before with a flag of truce to negoti-
 ate; when Sir Archibald, finding their object was but to
 gain time, rose from the council table, and told them
 he would pay them a visit before long: he gene-
 rally kept his word. However, the men in the
 stockade, who had manned the chief's war-boats,
 knew him personally, and he was repeatedly fired at
 by sharpshooters.

At the head-quarter's position at Kemendine,

the Burmans again escaped us, not from want of storming, but by getting out into the jungle during the night. I may here mention that four eighteen-pounder guns, placed in battery, at little more than a hundred yards distance from the stockade, which was made of bamboos, could not effect a breach. I had previously advised the commanding officer of artillery, whom I knew personally, to try double-headed shot, and had got some for him from a transport. When tried, the bars broke against the bamboos, and the shot would not enter; at length an eighteen-pounder, flanked by six-pounders firing grape, was run close up, and a breach was made with round shot.

Shortly after this, his Majesty's sloop *Sophie* was ordered to Calcutta for provisions, and Captain Marryat and most of his officers were attacked by fevers; he became so dangerously ill as to render it necessary for him to be removed to the lines near the Great Pagoda. One day, when going up to him with a communication from the general, Captain Marryat complained of the proceedings of two of the Honourable Company's cruizers—*Mercury*, a small corvette, and *Thetis*, a brig, I believe, of twelve guns,—which he had sent to reconnoitre, and, if possible, to ascertain what description of vessels would be able to proceed from the Rangoon branch into the Irrawaddy, the main river leading to, or rather running from, the capital; but which had returned twice without effecting the service required

of them. He added, that his commissioned officers were ill in the hospital, and that he had no one whom he could send with them.

On leaving Rangoon, Commodore Grant, supposing that if I merely belonged as a midshipman to any ship present, I might be removed from my post as naval aide-de-camp by any senior naval officer, had given me a document, shewing that I was lent 'on special service to the army,' still retaining me as belonging to his own ship the *Liffey*, which prevented my being removed as aide-de-camp. It was not my wish, however, any more than I knew it was the commodore's intention, that I should avoid service, and I accordingly informed Captain Marryat that if my services could be of any avail, and the general would let me go, I was ready. He immediately desired that I would speak to the general on the subject, who, after some objection, saying that I had been left by the commodore as his naval aide-de-camp, and he did not wish me to be away, gave his consent.

The orders I then received from Captain Marryat were to proceed on board the senior officer's vessel, to make observations on the river, &c., and in the event of the cruisers or their senior officer not acting with the energy the service required, to deliver a message from him, which I shall subsequently have occasion to repeat.

An engineer officer was also ordered to proceed on board, for the purpose of making observations.

I am the more particular in detailing these circumstances, as they gave me a somewhat difficult and disagreeable duty to perform, and affect the character of the senior officer with whom I was placed to act.

After repairing on board, and some delay occasioned by one of the vessels being in want of provisions, we weighed, taking with us, contrary to Captain Marryat's orders, two row-boats, which, however, I thought it not my business to disagree about. A fair wind and flowing tide soon brought us a-breast of Kemendine, which was then occupied by a British detachment as our advanced post. A little higher up, and directly in sight of Kemendine, the river divides into two branches, the point forming the entrances being an acute angle, and at that time held by the Burmans, who had stockaded it somewhat strongly; and who had also a smaller stockade on the opposite bank of the left branch.

On coming rapidly towards this point, the commander of the cruisers turned abruptly, and asked, 'which was the proper branch or channel?' I immediately answered, 'the left.' 'How did I know?' 'From its bearing, and from what I had seen on the charts.' He did not think it was, and appealed to the engineer officer, who, probably, thinking that a person so much my senior was most likely to be right, agreed with him, and we passed into the right branch, leaving the row-boat, attached to us, and

which, as already mentioned, we had brought contrary to orders, exposed to the fire of the stockade. This I pointed out to the captain, when he said he would anchor; no, that was not necessary, if he would only shorten sail, or back or shiver his mizentopsail, which was done, and the row-boat came up. However, we had not got a mile above the stockade, when he again turned abruptly, and said the passage we were in was not the right one, and he would anchor. I entreated him not to do so: we had entered, and could not get out again that tide, and, whether right or wrong, we might as well see where it led to, and what was going on upon it; we could not ground, for we were in ten fathoms water. In spite of all reasonings or entreaties he would anchor, and gave orders to shorten sail. I was then obliged, on his own quarter-deck, and before his officers, to deliver him Captain Marryat's message, which was, 'That he had twice returned in neglect of his orders, and without having effected the service on which he had been sent, and that if he now persisted in not proceeding, where there was no sufficient difficulty or impediment to prevent him, he must hold himself amenable to a court-martial.'

He did anchor, and at the change of the tide dropped down below Kemendine, whence he wrote officially to Captain Marryat, complaining of me. I accompanied one of his lieutenants who bore the letter, and having waited for him to deliver his captain's letter, and give any further explanations

he might feel inclined to give, or Captain Marryat to require, I merely stated what had taken place.

Captain Marryat, as may be supposed, was indignant, and declared that he would prefer charges against him at a court-martial. I endeavoured to intercede, on the plea of his having a wife and family; and it was at length agreed that he should be tried once more, by receiving orders to follow the king's officer, embarked in a gun-brig, and the following written order was given to me by Captain Marryat :

“ MEM°.—You are hereby required and directed to proceed in the Kitty, gun-vessel, and ascertain the possibility of large vessels obtaining a passage through the Rangoon river to the Irrawaddy. You will be accompanied by the Honourable Company's cruizers, Mercury and Thetis, and will always keep close order for protection. Although risk must necessarily be incurred in effecting a service of such importance, you will be careful not to run into any unnecessary danger. You will not discontinue your operations, to make any attack upon the enemy; and should you, at any part where the river is very narrow, find such an extended line of stockades with guns as to make you doubt the propriety of passing, you will take the opinion of the other officers of the expedition, and decide upon the result of your deliberations.

“ It will be advisable that the vessels should occasionally fire their broadsides in passing the

stockades and villages, that the enemy may be impressed with the force of the vessels, and be less inclined to make any attempt in boats.

“ Given under my hand at Rangoon, this 23d day of June, 1824.

(Signed) “ F. MARRYAT.”

To Mr. Maw, Midshipman,
H. M. S. Liffey.

Before starting, I was, of course, anxious to gain all such previous information as might the better enable me to perform the service on which I was about to be employed ; and, amongst other persons, I applied to Major Canning, the political agent to the expedition, and who had been selected for that office by the Indian government, from his supposed knowledge of the country, and of the character of the inhabitants.

The old gentleman, who was suffering by the effects of an illness from which he never recovered, received me most civilly, but knew nothing as to what we should be likely to meet with, excepting, that the Panlang creek—the passage we were to go up—was noted for the size and number of its mosquitoes. I was, consequently, compelled to trust to the local knowledge of a Burman, named Koo, whom I got to accompany me as pilot—and to my own instinct.

At eight a. m., on the 24th of June, I embarked on board the Kitty gun-brig, lying off Kemendine,

accompanied by Mr. Windsor, a midshipman of his Majesty's sloop *Sophie*, from whom I received all possible assistance; a boat's crew from the same vessel, a detachment of twenty-five men from his Majesty's forty-first regiment, under a serjeant; the general's barge men; and though last, not least, by my Burman pilot Koo, who was, from that time, always ready to accompany, and in whom I subsequently placed as much confidence as in any man I had with me.

Having communicated with the other officers of the expedition, soon after nine I made the signal to prepare to weigh, it being the first of the flood, and the wind south-easterly. We had, however, scarcely passed the enemy's positions, and entered the *left*, which was the proper passage, in the gun-brig, when we observed the *Thetis* drift into the other branch, and anchor. We were, accordingly, compelled to anchor, and wait for her. The breadth of the passage where we lay, which was about three-quarters of a mile above the enemy's position on Pagoda point, was about a hundred yards, and the depth of water—high water $8\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms; low water $5\frac{1}{2}$.

In the afternoon, the *Thetis* dropped with the ebb tide out of the passage she had got into, and the following morning weighed to join company, in doing which she run foul of the gun-brig, which was lying with her topsails hoisted, and anchor ready for tripping, waiting for the *Thetis*. We got

clear of her without much damage, and proceeded, but soon had to shorten sail, and again anchor, waiting for the cruisers. I then went on board the senior officer's vessel, the Mercury, and represented to him, that it was absolutely necessary to make greater exertions to get on. I also requested he would order the Thetis not to come within half a cable's length astern of us. He said he had ordered the Thetis to keep astern of us, but that he was unable to get his vessel round so as to make sail.

We again proceeded slowly, kedging up the river—three war-boats and several canoes moving up before us. About 1 h. 40 m. p. m. we passed a village on the larboard bank; and at two, the Mercury again anchored, when about three-quarters of a mile astern of us, the captain sending on board to tell me that he was in $3\frac{1}{2}$ fathoms water, and would not go any further. He was informed that we were in 5 fathoms, and desired to endeavour to make sail with the following morning's tide, or we should otherwise not fulfil our orders. We anchored, the tide being nearly done, and the Mercury came up to us.

Towards sunset I observed a Burman, in a small canoe, paddling down close in shore, and suspecting that he was carrying some communication to the village we had passed, or to the enemy's position below us, I ordered three muskets to be fired to stop him, when he jumped overboard, and hauled his canoe into the jungle.

Some fire-rafts that were made fast to the shore, were brought alongside and destroyed.

Between 8 and 9 in the evening I had gone below, having seen sentries planted on each bow and quarter, with particular orders to look out, and was sitting with the Sophie's midshipman and the master of the gun-brig, when Koo entered the cabin, and beckoning to me, called "Bamboo, Bamboo!" at the same time pointing to the lamp that was burning. I saw from his manner that something was going on, and followed him on deck, when it turned out that the Burmese war-boats were towing down fire-rafts, to which they were beginning to set fire, unobserved by the sentries.

I immediately ordered the boats to be manned, the vessels at the same time veering on their cables, so as to have more scope for sheering out of the way. The blaze spread rapidly, and before the rafts reached us, or we could reach them, they were in full force to burn and destroy; but the war-boats, either trusting too confidently to the effect of the fire-rafts, or entertaining a more respectable opinion of the seamen's prowess since the affairs at Kemendine, did not venture to come to close quarters; we, however, from not being at that time sufficiently acquainted with the action of the rafts, committed an error that was near proving fatal.

The headmost boats coming up to the leading raft; threw on their grapnels, when I gave directions to endeavour to tow it on shore before it reached

the vessels. The lower end was, however, no sooner checked in its progress, than, to my dismay, the upper end flew round, forming a crescent that extended two-thirds across the river. Not an instant was to be lost, for we were enclosing the vessels, when, ordering the boats which had grappled to give way, we succeeded in getting it end on and steering it past the vessels, whilst other boats proceeded to the second raft, and in like manner we got all clear without injury. In the middle watch, one of them returned from the village we had passed, but did no damage. During the night, four soldiers were taken ill with fever. Wind westerly.

In the morning of the 26th, I communicated with the captain of the Mercury; and when the tide made, we weighed in the gun-brig and made sail, but soon afterwards shortened sail, in consequence of stakes, apparently having a rope made fast to them and across the river. As we commenced kedging, we hooked a tree or something at the bottom, and drifted on to the starboard bank in a bight, the wind blowing fresh from the westward; we, however, soon warped off again, and anchored, waiting for the Mercury.

About this time, the man at the mast-head reported that a party of the enemy were crossing a plain towards the jungle that skirted the river's banks, and I went up myself to reconnoitre. The party was under the direction of a chief whom I took to

be the same we had noticed as particularly active on the 28th of May. He came from some villages on a distant part of the plain, where, judging from the smoke, and the appearance of herds of buffaloes being guarded, there was probably a large force. When about half a mile from the river, he dismounted, and sending his horse, with a guard of about thirty men, towards a point of the jungle, he came directly towards us with two men, one of whom carried his gilt chatah (umbrella), which is a badge of rank amongst the Burmans—furled, so that it might not be noticed. I thought it more than probable that this chief had something to do with the fire-rafts of the night before, whilst he was now evidently considering how he might next amuse us, and therefore determined on taking this opportunity to put part of my orders into execution, and of returning the chief his compliment. The blue jackets were ordered to the guns and swivels, and the soldiers to get their muskets, when allowing him to enter the jungle, and giving him a few moments to make observations, he was saluted with a volley from fore and aft, and a twelve-pound shot entering an empty house he had gone into, sent him and his party out more quickly than they had entered.

Whilst this was going on, I received two letters on service from the captain of the *Mercury*, telling me he would not go on. To the first I wrote in answer, that I saw no reason why we should not go

on, and that I would thank him to make greater exertions. However, he persisted in the second, and I could not compel him, not having authority to put him in arrest. I was obliged to return—my orders, both verbal and written, being to keep close order, and not run unnecessary risks. Moreover, from what we had then seen, it was pretty evident that the transports could not be brought through this passage, although the flotilla might, and we ought still to have proceeded.

In the evening we dropped down inside the Burmese stakes, to be out of the way of fire-rafts, and at day light in the morning weighed on our return towards Rangoon. At this time five of the soldiers and one seaman were ill with fever on board the gun-brig.

About 8 a.m. we came in sight of the enemy's positions on Pagoda point and opposite. The *Thetis*, which was the leading vessel, was allowed to pass quietly, but the gun-brig, which was known by being painted black, no sooner came within range, than we were saluted with shot from both sides; we, consequently, brought up for about twenty minutes, and returned their fire, the *Mercury* also engaging. As, however, we were doing little more than wasting powder and shot, we again proceeded.

During the time we had been away, another stockade of about fifty or sixty yards in front had been erected on the Kemendine side of the river, and was full of men; when supposing the commanding

officer of that post might not be aware of his neighbours, I sent a boat on shore to inform him.

On returning to Rangoon, I reported our proceedings to Captain Marryat, who asked my opinion respecting the expedition passing up the channel we had been in. I said, that from what we had seen, I thought the flotilla and boats might pass, but I did not think the transports would. My reasons were—

First.—That, although the water might be sufficiently deep as far as we had been, which was perhaps, fifteen miles, the channel was in some parts narrow, and run principally to the W.N.W., and the wind being frequently from the westward, they could not sail.

Secondly.—The flood-tides getting weaker up the river, and there being trees or some other things at the bottom, which the anchors hooked, it would be difficult to kedge ; and

Thirdly.—The means possessed by the Burmans of acting against a number of transports by sending down fire-rafts, sinking vessels, &c. Captain Marryat expressed himself satisfied, and thanked me for what I had done, but sent the Mercury to lie at the mouth of the river entering from the sea. I have since heard that the officers preferred charges against the captain, and broke him. I regret that such should have been the case, not only as it is not agreeable to see others suffer whilst we succeed, but I think this unfortunate man's conduct

might have proceeded, in a great measure, from an error in judgment. He had evidently made up his mind that this service was not to be performed; and when he saw a person so much younger sent to execute what he had not succeeded in, angry feelings might have seconded want of energy. He had, I believe, a wife and family, who had not only to endure the bitter feelings of his disgrace, but must have been reduced from comparative affluence into difficulties. I can scarcely be supposed partial to him, but *I much wish* that any claim I could make on the liberality of the Honorable Company—and I did serve them almost to the loss of life without having received the slightest emolument—might tend to the amelioration of his family. I have not mentioned his name, out of feeling to his friends, but it is no doubt known at the India House.

On the 29th June, whilst the general and his staff were at dinner, a Despatch arrived from the brigadier at Kemendine, informing Sir Archibald, that the enemy had crossed the river above his position in heavy columns, and appeared to be making great preparations with war-boats, &c. for an attack, and requesting reinforcements. I was immediately sent off to Captain Marryat, who was still an invalid living in the lines, near the Great Pagoda, to request he would order up such naval force as he might consider best calculated for the service; and having received his orders for Lieutenant Fraser,

second lieutenant of his own ship the *Larne*, to proceed with the gun-brig flotilla up to Kemendine, abreast of which he was to anchor. I informed the general, and delivered the orders ; when I was again despatched in the general's barge to inform the brigadier that reinforcements were coming, and to keep up such a communication as might enable the general to judge of the enemy's proceedings. On reaching Kemendine, I found the brigadier and his staff outside the works, reconnoitring the enemy, who were making movements with war-boats on the river above ; but apparently not threatening an immediate attack. I waited until Lieutenant Fraser had arrived and anchored the flotilla, which he effected expeditiously, and having communicated with him, returned to report to the general. During the night, the general's barge was again ordered up to Kemendine, and at day-break I accompanied the brigadier with a detachment of sepoys to make a reconnoissance, but we did not then meet with the enemy, and I again returned to head-quarters.

These proceedings continued until the 1st of July, the men, especially the general's bargemen, being much harassed, when, about noon of that day, the general, accompanied by Colonel Snodgrass, came down to the principal wharf or battery, near which I was employed with the boats' crews, and calling me to him, informed me, in an undertone, 'that the enemy were about to commence an attack.' As he spoke, I looked up the

river, and saw the first fire-raft coming round a point about a mile above the shipping. Heaving some lumber, we had in the boat, overboard, we immediately gave way to meet and grapple the raft ; and the boats of the squadron under Captain Marryat's personal direction, coming up without loss of time, we succeeded in towing away fifty-three fire-rafts without injury, though not without some difficulty.

Most of these fire-rafts were not so formidable as those sent down on the gun-brig and cruizers, when in advance ; but some of them were formidable, having large canoes filled with fire attached to them, and one or two river craft of 20 or 30 tons burthen, filled in a similar manner, and, of course, burnt to the water's edge. In grappling these burning masses, the men were not only exposed to an excessive heat, which made some of them ill, but there was a chance of the mass foundering and taking down the boat with it, the grappling irons being, of necessity, made fast by chains. The transports were anchored in two lines, one on each side of the river, and the rafts were towed between them without any material damage.

Whilst these operations were going on afloat, the enemy moved out in heavy columns to attack the British lines ; it being the Burmese emperor's positive orders to his general, to attack the English, and either to drive them into the sea whence they came, or to send them all prisoners to the capi-

tal, to be dealt with 'according to his clemency!'—On this occasion, the enemy on the right, coming in contact with some of our native infantry, succeeding in posting themselves on a hill within our picquets, about 400 yards from the line, whence they commenced firing from some swivels and jingals; but a field-gun and howitzer were brought up against them, and, after firing a few rounds, Sir Archibald ordered three companies of sepoys to advance and drive them from their position, which was done, the Burmans retreating to the jungle, and leaving upwards a of hundred dead.

During the night, a Burman division advancing under cover of the empty houses of Dalla, a town abreast of Rangoon on the opposite side of the river, made an attack on a British detachment stationed there, and killed the commanding officer. On hearing the firing, the general ordered me across in his barge, to see what was going on, and accompanied by the crew, cutlass in hand, I made my way through deserted streets, until we came to where the detachment still held ground, under the second in command. We found him with a drum for a table, penning a despatch almost as elaborate as this memoir, but being somewhat inclined to criticise his own composition, he was about to re-compose, when he was informed that if he did so he must keep his despatch, or send it by some other conveyance; and having learnt what was the state

of affairs, that the sooner a reinforcement was sent the better, and taking charge of some prisoners who had been captured, I returned to Rangoon.

In consequence of this, and other skirmishes under cover of the empty houses, the general gave orders for the town of Dalla to be burnt, it having been hitherto preserved in hopes of the inhabitants returning; and I may here state, that had they done so, it was at all times Sir Archibald's intention to have protected them. Plunder was strictly prohibited on all occasions, except in storming stockades,—when some of the men occasionally captured a chief's ornaments, or ornamented arms,—and the provost-marshal, who was active had strict orders. The inhabitants were, however, at that time prevented from returning by the Burman troops.

On the morning of the 3rd of July, several of the enemy were observed to be passing with wood, &c., from a village on the distant part of a plain, to a jungle in the rear of Dalla, and were at length discovered to be erecting a line of stockades.

In the forenoon, three companies of his Majesty's 41st regiment were ordered to check their proceedings, and, if possible, to cut off those employed. To do which, it was necessary to make a circuit round a small jungle, so as to keep the enemy between the detachment of the 41st, and some sepoy who were at Dalla. The jungle was soon found to be full of Burmans, who, on our approaching an angle of the jungle, came out in considerable numbers, and com-

menced firing upon us from some jingals. Seeing the leading men halt for the rear to close up and form into line, the nature of the country, which was a plain of mud covered with water, having occasioned them to be too much extended, the enemy probably thought we were afraid, and advanced with cheers, apparently intending to attack us; but finding the troops fix bayonets, and move steadily forward to meet them, they changed their opinion, and retreated out of musquet range, still accompanying us towards the stockades; two of which were found unfinished and evacuated, and a third was stormed.

Two circumstances occurred here, which it may not be improper to mention. As we were preparing to storm, a Burman came towards the front of our line, and telling us that he was a soldier, or rather perhaps 'a marked warrior,' called upon us 'to advance;' on the stockade's being taken, he was found mortally wounded! About the same time, a serjeant of the 41st, struck in the head by a shot; turned short round and fell, when he was ordered to be put into one of the hammocks that had been brought out for the wounded, but recovering sufficiently to stand, he raised himself up and seizing his musquet, answered 'not till the place is taken!' nor would he keep back! The detachment of the 41st returned to their lines.

On the 5th, information was sent to the general that a noise had been heard during the previous

night, as of a large number of people at work in the jungle close to the Great Pagoda. Sir Archibald accordingly went up to reconnoitre, and smoke being observed, some shells and rockets were thrown in the direction of it. After which, five companies, one from each of the European regiments, were ordered to advance; on moving a short distance from the Pagoda, the road branched in different directions, and the troops separated, three companies going to the right and two to the left.

The three companies having passed near a mile through the jungle, came to a small plain, when the commanding officer, supposing that he must be beyond the stockade, gave orders to face about and return by another road, or rather pathway, that could scarcely be traced. We had got to about the middle of the jungle on our way back, and had almost given up the idea of meeting with a stockade, when the advanced guard was suddenly fired on from jingals, &c.; and Captain Barret, of his Majesty's 13th regiment, who commanded it, was shot through the arm. A continual fire was then kept up, principally by the Madras Europeans, and it became difficult to place the scaling-ladders, but they were at length brought up, and we got in, the enemy not standing at close quarters: however, they had, by this time, acquired sufficient experience to carry off their arms, and left nothing behind them but their dinners, which were cooking. The stockade was not finished, but was sufficiently spacious

to have held several thousand men. We lost four men killed ; Captain Barret, a serjeant, nineteen rank and file, and four pioneres, wounded. This loss was partly occasioned by the scaling-ladders not being brought up soon enough, the firing of the Madras Europeans rendering it impossible to go to the front without the chance of being shot ; the other two companies joined during the attack, and we afterwards returned to the lines. It is right to mention that the Madras Europeans were the first men who entered the stockade.

On the 7th, Sir Archibald having determined on repaying the Burman general's visit, and driving the enemy from their position on Pagoda point, above Kemendine, communicated with Captain Marryat ; when the Honorable Company's cruisers, Teignmouth, Thetis, and Jessey ; several gun-brigs, and the Satellite transport, late an eighteen-gun brig in his Majesty's service, and now having some of the Larne's guns and men on board, moved up under the command of Lieutenant Fraser, ready to commence an attack on the following morning.

Early on the 8th of July, a detachment of his Majesty's 41st regiment, under Colonel Godwin, and some native infantry, under Major Wahab, marched from the Pagoda to Kemendine, where the boats of the squadron were sent to embark them. At the same time General Macbean, accompanied by Brigadier M'Creigh, proceeded with a division of about 2000 men, consisting of detachments of 250

men each from his Majesty's 13th, 38th, and 89th regiments, and of the Honourable Company's Madras European regiment, and the 7th Madras Native infantry, so as, if possible, to cut off those of the enemy who might be on the Rangoon side of the river.

The attack on Pagoda point commenced by throwing eight-inch shells, but the distance proved too great for them to produce much effect; and, from the swampy state of the country, the mortars could not be got nearer. Consequently, when the tide made in favour, which was about 11 a. m., the cruisers and flotilla were ordered to move up and endeavour to breach. In about an hour, the signal was made from the Satellite, 'breach practicable,' and the sepoys were ordered to advance and storm, supported by the 41st.

Colonel Godwin seeing the boats in which the sepoys were embarked bring up alongside of the Satellite, whilst a strong flood tide was running, and endangered their being carried past the position without being able to bring up, hailed me, to know what they were about, and whether he had not better push on with the 41st. I said the pushing on depended on himself, but that I thought if the sepoys did not take care they would be carried past the stockade. He then asked me to come into his boat, which I did, and taking the helm from the Bengalee coxswain, who got alarmed, steered for

the works. The sepoys also moved on, and I believe both parties entered much about the same time, the sepoys by the breach, the 41st escalading over each other's shoulders.

Colonel Godwin, who was not himself a tall man, and had been wounded in the hand in the Peninsula, had two of the tallest of his grenadiers to hand him into the works, which, in the energy to get on, they did without his sword, and he was without arms. However, the Burmans soon gave way, leaving the sepoys to keep possession. Colonel Godwin was ordered by the general to re-embark with the 41st, and storm another stockade on the left bank going up, which was done. A third stockade was evacuated by them. In the mean time General Macbean, proceeding with his division, punished the Burmans severely.

Having advanced about six miles through jungle, &c., he came upon a strong line of stockades, that proved to be the head-quarters of the Burmese commander-in-chief, the Soomba Woongy, third minister of the empire; and giving Brigadier M'Creigh the detachments of his Majesty's 13th and 38th regiments, and grenadiers of the 89th, to take the works, kept the field himself with the remainder.

After sending an engineer officer to reconnoitre, the brigadier determined on carrying all by assault, which was done in most gallant style, several of the officers being engaged hand to hand with the enemy,

especially Major Sale, of his Majesty's 13th regiment, whose gallantry, on this and many other occasions, attracted general notice.

General Macbean also fell in with a large body of the enemy, who were escaping from the stockades on the banks of the river, and he did not allow them to pass unnoticed. On the whole, the Burmans were supposed to have lost upwards of 1000 men, amongst whom was the Woongy, a Woondoch, and two other chiefs of the first class. More plunder was obtained by the men here than on any previous occasion; part consisting of the Woongy's gold chain of rank, which was taken by a private soldier, and was valued at 60*l.*, and his silver dinner service, which was being served up as the works were carried. So confident was the Woongy of his position being impregnable,—his own stockade was double—one inside the other,—that when his officers reported the successive carrying of the smaller works by the British troops, he still persisted, and at length had not time to escape before he was mortally wounded.

The amount of arms captured on this day in the various positions, was 38 pieces of artillery, 40 swivels, and 300 muskets, besides swords, spears, &c. Our loss was two serjeants, and two rank and file, killed; Captain Johnson, of his Majesty's 13th regiment, one serjeant, three corporals, twenty-nine rank and file, and one lascar, wounded. Lieutenant Fraser, Captain Hardy, and the officers in command

of the Honourable Company's cruizers, Thetis and Jessey, were officially thanked by Sir Archibald Campbell. Captain Hardy, who commanded the Honourable Company's cruizer, Teignmouth, was actively employed on several other occasions, and always with credit to himself.

On the following morning, July 9, Colonel Godwin was sent with a detachment of his own regiment, embarked on board the steam-vessel, and accompanied by the general's barge and some row-boats, to observe the state of the works and the proceedings of the enemy.

Passing the stockades upon Pagoda point and the opposite banks, which were unoccupied, excepting by numerous large vultures, who were perched upon the walls, pluming themselves, and apparently much gratified with the meal our previous day's work had given them, we proceeded up the right branch of the river, and landed at the point nearest to Kumaroot, the head-quarter's position, which had been attacked and carried by the division under General Macbean and Brigadier M^cCreigh.

On approaching the works they appeared to be re-occupied, when Colonel Godwin ordering a halt, called upon Trant and myself to give our opinions whether he ought to proceed? This was an awkward question for two young men to answer. Trant was one of those persons who always appeared to consider himself *indebted* to the Burmans, and particularly anxious to repay them; however, we

both gave our opinions against the detachments proceeding, adding, of course, that we were personally ready to go on.

Our reasons were,—that if the works were re-occupied by the enemy, it would scarcely be with a less force than they had in them the day before, for their troops would probably be concentrated; and as it had required all the exertions of the division under General Macbean to carry them, the detachment we had was not sufficient.

After a little consideration, Colonel Godwin gave orders for returning towards the boats. On our way back, we met the general's boat's crew running through the jungle towards the stockades. Before leaving them, I had planted sentries, with positive orders that they were not to move out of the boat, thinking they might possibly be wanted to communicate with the General. I had, however, no sooner got out of sight with Colonel Godwin, than the coxswain intimated to the sentries that they might withdraw, and started at the head of his crew, armed with cutlasses and pistols, to fight the Woongy, or any other Burmese general they might meet. They had, as they thought knowingly, taken the route of the jungle, to keep out of our way, or, perhaps, to get there before us, and cut us out.

This disobedience occasioned a discrepancy: I threatening to send them back to the ship from which they had volunteered, and they protesting it was very hard they were not allowed to go to the stockades.

“ You, Sir, go with the general and brigadiers, and we never go.” However, they at length became sensible of their fault, and begged forgiveness, which was granted ; and in less than a month this same boat’s crew, in defiance of another officer’s orders, saved my life when exposed to a heavy fire, and I have not since been able to meet them, to thank them for so doing.

Having examined some smaller works on the opposite bank of the river, which were unoccupied, Colonel Godwin returned to Rangoon, and, in consequence of his report, Sir Archibald ordered a stronger force to proceed to Kumaroot. The works were then found unoccupied, and it was understood that the Burmese we had seen, were parties who had been sent to collect shot, or such other stores as might have been left.

In consequence of these defeats, and the death of the chiefs, the enemy either dispersed from the neighbourhood of Rangoon, or fell back to the Prince of Sarrawaddy, who was said to be advancing with a force of 70,000 men, but which was subsequently commanded by their famous General Bandoola.

About this time a person of the name of Gibson, the descendant of an Englishman by a Malay woman, arrived at Rangoon. It appeared that he had been employed by the Burman emperor as his ambassador at the court of Cochin China, whither he had been despatched for the purpose of inducing

the king to make war in conjunction with the emperor on their mutual neighbour the king of Siam. The Burman, not improbably, thought that should he commence hostilities against the British possessions, which he had, no doubt, long meditated, the Siamese, who were the rivals of the Burmese, might avail themselves of the opportunity to retaliate some of their sufferings, or reconquer some of the possessions their more powerful opponents had at other times wrested from them, and he therefore, not unwisely, sought to find employment for the Siamese from the king of Cochin China.

The mission had, however, not succeeded, and even the presents which were sent on the occasion were not accepted, with the exception of one small ruby.

On his return, calling at Sincapore, Mr. Gibson was informed of the war, and being forwarded to Penang, declared his desire of making himself useful, as he considered himself an Englishman, although he had lived all his life amongst the Burmans.

The account he gave of himself was, that he stood high in the emperor's favour, having been employed by him on various occasions. But, on Sir Archibald's inquiring whether he would take charge of a letter to his friend the emperor, he replied—"It is very true that I stand high in the emperor's favour, and I believe that if I was with him he would pay

attention to what I said ; but I also believe, that if I were to set off now, I might never reach him—I might lose my head !”

Mr. Gibson’s statement was thought not improbable, and he was permitted to remain at Rangoon. He had brought a variety of specimens from Cochin China, amongst which was a peculiar ourang outang, the most disgusting satyr, or, if it may so be said, satire upon the human race I ever beheld. It had all the apparent characteristics of a very decrepit, idiotic, little old man.

July 10th.—His Majesty’s ship Alligator, commanded by the late Captain Alexander, called at Rangoon, but sailed the second day for Calcutta.

About the same time the crew of his Majesty’s ship Larne having suffered, and still suffering, much from sickness, and Captain Marryat supposing that there was nothing particular going on at Rangoon, determined on dropping his ship down to the mouth of the river, which was done, when, as remarked by Colonel Snodgrass, I ‘was the only naval officer doing duty at Rangoon.’ This honour or difficulty, for it might perhaps be termed both, did not last long, but whilst it did last, Sir Archibald desired me to make arrangements for transporting 1000 men up the Pegue river, and the following is the arrangement I made.

WITH THE GUN-VESSELS.

Steam-boat	100
Seven Malay boats	175
Jessey	50
Fourteen gun-vessels	675
Total	1000

In case of the gun-vessels not being able to proceed—

Staem-boat	150
Seven Malay boats	175
Red-boats	300
Flat-boats	150
Ships'-boats	225
Total	1000

The boats were to accompany the gun-vessels in the first instance, but my object was to prevent the necessity of the men being exposed to the deleterious effects of the atmosphere at night and during rain, without occasioning delay in case the gun-vessels should not be able to proceed, which it was more than probable they would not beyond a certain point or range of tide. The red-boats were the row-boats, with twelve-pounder carronades in the bows. However, before my arrangement was carried into execution, the first lieutenant of the *Larne*, who had been ill in hospital, returned to duty, and all was altered.

I was returning one afternoon from having taken Sir Archibald Campbell's Despatches for the governor-general to a transport, which was about to

proceed to Calcutta, when on landing I met several detachments of troops marching down to embark. As it was dinner time—and dinner was dinner at Rangoon, even at head-quarters—I did not wait long to talk to the officers, but proceeded to inform the general of his Despatches being delivered, when I was informed that the troops I had met were ordered to embark in the flotilla for the purpose of proceeding up the Puzendoon Creek, and that, as the first lieutenant of the *Larne* was in too delicate a state of health to be exposed at night in superintending his own arrangement, I was to take charge.

This was not altogether fair; for it might have been evident to any one that this arrangement would not answer. However, as my duties were obedience and exertion, I dispatched my meal and went down to the wharf to see after the embarkation, which was effected by dark: when, the ebb tide making, I threw up a rocket as a signal for the flotilla to weigh and drop down to the mouth of the Pegue river, where they were to anchor and wait for the flood-tide to carry them up, for, the wind being contrary and the night dark, they could not sail up. Fortunately all anchored safe, excepting one vessel, which got rather below the mouth of the river, owing to the darkness of the night, and not being able to see the entrance. Towards morning the flood-tide made, and we again weighed, when some of the masters got their vessels aground off the point. I was busy superintending their warping off, which

they had succeeded in doing, the others meantime proceeding; when at day-light, the steam-boat, with the general and principal staff officers of the troops on board, made her appearance. I had previously desired the coxswain of the general's barge, which was towing a-stern, on coming to the vessel I should be in, to bring the boat for me; but seeing that she did not shove off, I took one of the flotilla's boats, and went on board.

I was received by the first lieutenant of the Larne, with, "I am surprised, or, I am astonished, Sir, that you have not got on better! I expected the flotilla would have been much further up!" He was, however, informed, that, "had he taken the trouble to consider the time of tides he need not have been surprised, as such vessels could not well move up rivers against wind and tide during dark nights." I then reported myself to the general, who appeared excessively angry, and walked aft to where the staff officers were standing, leaving the first lieutenant to carry on his arrangement as he pleased.

It was soon found that the gun-vessels could not proceed so as to be efficient, and Sir Archibald desired, that as many of his Majesty's 38th regiment as could be stowed, should be taken on board the steam-boat and the Jessey, and the former taking the latter in tow, we proceeded, accompanied by the general's barge, and one or two row-boats.

Various discrepancies now took place between the

first lieutenant of the Larne and the steam-vessel's people ; and on the second day the machinery was so materially damaged in consequence of a misunderstanding, that it would not work, and after waiting a day in vain attempts to repair it, the general and staff had to return for about twenty miles in his barge : fortunately no attempt was made to attack us, although we passed some bodies of Burmese, for, had any of the then passengers been killed or wounded, it might have had a serious effect upon the expedition.

Sir Archibald Campbell's principal object on this occasion, I believe, was, to liberate some of the families belonging to Rangoon, whom he had been informed were in villages on the banks of the Puzendoon Creek, and were prevented from returning to their houses in the town, by a force of about three thousand Burmese troops. He had, therefore, ordered General Macbean to proceed with twelve hundred men by land, whilst he went up the creek with six hundred more. General Macbean was prevented from proceeding by nullahs, creeks, and the swampy state of the country ; and it has already been seen what became of the flotilla, whom we met on our way back, not much further advanced.

On approaching the villages in the steam-vessel, the inhabitants observing the smoke, and hearing the noise, which they had never seen or heard before, fancied we were bringing some infernal engine to destroy them, and ran in all directions towards

the plains, carrying with them such light things as they valued, and would not impede their progress. But, at length, finding that those who did not, or could not get away, were not immolated, and the guides, who were Burmans, calling to them that we were come to succour and not to destroy, they began to gain confidence, and some of them, coming off with their families in canoes, returned with us to Rangoon.

The scarcity of supplies of fresh provisions amongst the British forces at Rangoon, was such, that even the hospitals could not be supplied with them, and the general himself, more than once, dined on salt provisions. As, however, there were now sundry cocks and hens amusing themselves in the almost unoccupied villages, Captain Campbell and myself were sent to reconnoitre the enemy, with an intimation, that should we meet with any poultry, we might, if we could, 'purchase some,' but 'not to plunder.' The first person we met, was an old woman so infirm that she had not been able to run away; and blind, so that she could only judge of us by description, which had probably not been very favourable. We accosted her as politely as aides-de-camp usually do ladies, but the only 'impression' we could make, was, that she evidently expected to be sacrificed, and remained kneeling, whilst she either could not, or would not speak. So taking silence for consent, finding none of the enemy to reconnoitre, and not thinking the old lady,

'the chicken' we wanted, we proceeded to the second part of our business, which was, to look after the poultry, and whilst thus employed, we were joined by Sir Archibald and Colonel Snodgrass, who informed us of the steam-vessel's machinery being damaged. As we returned in the barge, the villages were re-occupied, and the inhabitants of some saluted us civilly; but there were evidently parties of Burmese troops amongst them. On returning to head-quarters, our success obtained, from the officers in the lines, the title of 'the fowl expedition,' with I believe a caricature, which I was never permitted to see. Several river vessels laden with rice, &c. were found lying in the creek, and were subsequently taken possession of.

Nothing particular occurred for some days.

A subadar, a native officer of sepoys, being sent with a small detachment, embarked in four row-boats, to afford protection to any of the Rangoon families who might wish to escape, went by mistake up the Pegue river, and discovered a stockade occupied by the enemy, when he returned with the information; and on the 4th of August, Sir Archibald Campbell went to reconnoitre with a brigade, and some seamen under the direction of Captain Marryat, who had returned with his Majesty's ship *Larne*, from the mouth of the river, his crew being improved in health, though reduced in numbers from previous deaths. The stockade was found to be erected on the position of one of the old factories

at Siriam, having a small creek between it and the landing place, and a large village in the rear.

After a few shells thrown from a sloop called the *Powerful*, and which was the vessel that brought mooring chains to Rangoon, and a few shot from the *Jessey*, the troops landed, and the seamen, led on by Captain Marryat, repairing a bridge over the creek whilst exposed to the enemy's fire, enabled the soldiers to pass over. The stockade was carried by assault, but only one of the enemy was found dead inside, and he was shot by a sepoy whilst storming. The Burmans probably carried off other killed and wounded, as they always appeared desirous that we should not know their loss, and wells were occasionally found filled with bodies.

The position was extensive, and there were some remarkably well built new bamboo houses, one of which was intended for the eldest of the Burman emperor's brothers, who was expected down to take command. In it were found two royal war-drums, and the steer-paddle of a gilt war-boat, numerous orders from the emperor, and woongies, addressed to the governor of Siriam, were also taken. They directed him 'to see that none of the English ships escaped; to put to death all prisoners he might take, without mercy; and informed him that a force was on its way to Rangoon, which would certainly annihilate all the English found there!'

We were subsequently told, 'that the governor

was sent for in chains by the Prince of Sarrawaddy, for not fulfilling these orders, and allowing his post to be taken, and that after having had his head on the block to be decapitated for the agreeable space of 'three days,' he was pardoned, and allowed to return to his government, on the condition of his being more zealous in future, and promising to take prisoners, and, unfortunately, he was too successful in so doing. On his return, he kept parties on the look out: sentries were seen sitting like monkeys in the highest trees of the neighbouring jungles; they communicated with parties, and if an unfortunate straggler was seen, he was lurked after and cut off. Some lascars who were fishing were taken, and a boat belonging to the General Wood transport was also captured: from the body of one of the crew which was afterwards found, it appeared that the man had been tortured, and then speared.

As the Siriam Pagoda, which was about three miles from the stockade, was said to be fortified, Lieutenant-Colonel Kelly, of the Madras European regiment, was sent with some of his own men, and a detachment of his Majesty's 41st regiment, to drive the enemy out. The position was found to be strong, and had the Burmans stood as they should have done, or did in some of the first affairs, it would have been difficult to carry; but they were now losing their confidence, and as the troops advanced to the foot of the numerous steps that led

up to the Pagoda, the enemy gave way, and retreated from the opposite side into the jungle. Four pieces of artillery were found at the Pagoda, and were destroyed, and six taken in the stockade, two of which were eighteen-pounder carronades, were brought away. There were also some wall pieces, and a considerable quantity of gunpowder, which they appeared to have manufactured in the stockade.

Between the 14th of July and the 5th of August, eight of our men were wounded.

On the 6th of August, some Burmese, two men, three women, and two children, came to Rangoon in two canoes, stating, that they had escaped from a village on the Dalla side, and on being questioned, gave the following account:—"An order has been sent for a general levy of men in the Dalla district: the inhabitants have refused to obey, and a chief of high rank has been sent down to enforce the order; the country is in confusion, and during the disturbance we have found means to escape, and are come here for protection."

In the early part of the day, Sir Archibald had observed parties of Burmans crossing and re-crossing the plain of Dalla, between the jungle and the river craft, that were in docks on the banks of the river, and had desired me to take two or three of his sepoy guard and drive them away; unfortunately, my own boat's crew, the general's barge-men, were out of the way, having, I believe, gone for their pro-

visions, and I was, therefore, obliged to go with the sepoys, in a boat manned by lascars.

On landing, some of the Burmans were not far from us, and I ordered the sepoys to fire on them, but they either did not, or would not, understand me, and fired in a wrong direction. More Burmans then came out, and, taking a musket from one of the sepoys, I fired myself, and then desired the sepoys to charge; but the Burmans giving way and retreating towards the jungle, and the sepoys not being inclined to come on, I could do nothing more than drive them, perhaps, between a quarter and half a mile, when they increased considerably in numbers, the jungle being also full of the enemy.

In consequence of this and other information, Sir Archibald determined on detaching a force to see what was going on.

On Sunday the 8th of August, a detachment of 400 men, consisting of Madras Europeans, native infantry, and some artillery, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Kelly of the Madras European regiment, and some of his Majesty's ship Larne's men, embarked in a gun-boat under the command of Lieutenant Fraser, second lieutenant of the Larne, and the general's boat's crew, was sent to attack any part of the enemy's line that might be met with, and to act otherwise as from circumstances the lieutenant-colonel might judge requisite.

We proceeded with a flowing tide up the Dalla creek; but had not gone far, when some Burmans

were observed escaping in canoes from chokeys on the banks. The general's boat, being unincumbered with troops, gave way in chase of them; when, rounding a point, we came suddenly on two strong stockades. The affair was at once explained, the intention, no doubt, having been to draw us into a scrape; for the works being strong, and the banks on which they stood, steep and deep with mud, had they not been seen before the whole detachment became exposed, the boats might have drifted to a part of the bank where the men could not have landed, and the loss been greater than it was. Fortunately, however, we had got sufficiently a-head to return and give notice before the rest of the boats, which were now advancing with the tide at its strength, became exposed, and the whole were brought-to, under cover of a point, until arrangements were made for an attack.

The advance was then sounded; but, badly as the Bengalees in the row-boats had often behaved, they were now worse than ever, getting their boats foul of each other without pulling, and leaving the troops exposed to the enemy's fire whilst the tide drifted them towards the stockades. I tried, by cheering, praising, and abusing them, in such English and Hindostanee as I could muster, to rouse them to a sense of their duty—but they were not to be roused, they were literally '*brutal*,' '*cowardly*;' when the brigade-major, who, with the lieutenant-colonel, was

then in the general's boat, observed to me, that the enemy had got the range, and appeared to be paying us particular attention, for the boat had been struck more than once ; and seeing that Lieutenant Fraser was advancing with the Larne's men in the gun-boat, I turned to Colonel Kelly, telling him it was useless to wait for the Bengalees, and that we had better push on. He consented, the crew gave three cheers, and we flew past the Bengalees and their row-boats.

We landed at a break in the bank, only a short distance from the principal stockade ; but when on shore, finding that there was only the boat's crew, Captain Campbell, the general's son (and who was his military aide-de-camp,) and myself, to move on, and that it would be impossible to get over works fourteen—I say fourteen, but I believe they were fifteen—feet high, without scaling ladders, I desired the crew to stand under cover of a bank, whilst I went to reconnoitre. I was looking towards an angle of the stockade that appeared to me not to be entirely finished, and where I was thinking we might possibly get in, when I was knocked down ! I had not thought of being shot—for what will not use do ?—and I had really seen so many knocked down, that I had begun to think I never should be hit. My first impression was surprise, and next that I was killed ; for I could not move even a finger, although my senses were clear.

I heard the bargemen exclaim, some that I was killed, others that I was shot; but, one and all, they rushed forward to save me.

By this time the troops were beginning to land, and Lieutenant Fraser coming up, and supposing that I was killed, ordered the bargemen to leave me, and go on to the stockade. Their answer, I believe, was, that 'they had brought me on shore, and, dead or alive, they would carry me off.' I was nearly suffocated with blood, and my tongue was split into three pieces; but I made them understand to keep up my head, and to get the sword that had fallen from my hand; which they did, and having carried me to a boat, returned to the works. Had the troops marched over me, it is more than probable that instant death would have been the consequence.

The works were carried with the loss of six killed and thirty-nine wounded, amongst the latter of whom were two other officers.

On our way back to Rangoon, whither the wounded officers were conveyed in a small boat after the stockades were taken, we met Captain Marryat coming up with reinforcements, the firing having been heard at head-quarters.

From this time my personal acquaintance with the operations of the war ceased, being unable to move about, and almost unable to speak. I could, however, hear and see; and by such means learnt, that the enemy endeavouring to re-occupy the works

on the Dalla creek, "the brave conduct of Captain Marryat and his lads," in opposing them, obtained not only the official thanks of Sir Archibald Campbell, but the approbation of the higher naval authorities. Shortly afterwards, Captain Chads arriving in his Majesty's sloop *Arachne* from England, Captain Marryat proceeded with his Majesty's sloop *Larne* to Penang, his crew being extremely reduced in numbers, and weak from sickness. The energy and gallantry of Captain Chads, not only during the Burmese but the American war, needs no comment from me.

A few days after I was wounded, I received a note from one of my messmates in the *Liffey*, informing me of Commodore Grant's death. I was at the time sufficiently sensible to understand that he was dead, but how I could not comprehend. I felt that I had lost a friend and a commander, whom I respected and more than esteemed. In an interested point of view, his death was perhaps a loss to those who had served under him; for had he lived to return to England, it is more than probable his influence and ability would have placed him in authority, when he might have proved a valuable patron; but laying aside all private feeling, the death of Commodore Grant was a loss to his country! All who knew him as an officer, must be aware of his zeal and ability in forwarding the interests of the service; those only who had the happiness to sail with him, could experience his

private goodness and liberality. He was as excellent an officer as he was a man. He was, perhaps, not so fortunate as some of our great naval characters in meeting with opportunities to distinguish himself; but *he will be remembered, beloved, and respected by all who knew him.*

The surgeons, who, I believe, at first supposed my wound fatal, being of opinion that I would not be fit for duty for some time, and that it was necessary I should return to England, and the commodore being dead, Sir Archibald Campbell, in conjunction with Captain Marryat, as the senior naval officer present, ordered me to be embarked on board the Robarts, transport, to proceed to Calcutta. I left Rangoon on the 26th of August, and landed at Calcutta on the 16th of September, where I was kindly received by Lady Campbell, at her house in Garden Reach.

The governor-general in council, in a most handsome letter, granted me the same passage which is usually allowed to junior officers in the army. I again embarked with Captain Barret and some other of my Rangoon friends, on board the Henry Porcher, a free trader, bound to England, on the 18th of October. On the 28th, the pilot left us off the sand heads of the Hoogly, and we made sail for our native country, calling at Madras and St. Helena.

On our arrival at the latter place, we heard of the unfortunate affair at Barrackpore, but were not so much surprised, as Colonel Marley, who had been Sir Edward Paget's military secretary, and was

then a passenger with us, had previously known of the desertion of 150 non-commissioned officers and privates from a native battalion in one night, in consequence of being ordered to move towards the frontier.

We, of course, visited the tomb of Napoleon, bringing with us pieces from the willows that grow over, and sprigs from the geraniums that surround, him; and, after a tolerable passage, landed at Plymouth on the 17th of March. During the passage, several pieces of my teeth and jaw, which had been damaged, exfoliated from the wound, and, three years after, the ball itself worked out during a winter's passage round Cape Horn, in his Majesty's ship *Menai*.

Having now done my utmost to describe the proceedings of the various British forces employed in the earlier operations of the Burmese war, and their peculiar modes of acting, I shall endeavour to shew the nature of the country in which they had to act; the character of the Burmans, and the means which they possessed of opposing the British forces; and shall conclude with a brief notice of the comments or criticisms which have been made on the war and its operations.

Neighbourhood of Rangoon.

The country round Rangoon is not, as some persons have supposed, an entire jungle. The jungles are mostly on the banks of the river and its branches, or on elevated grounds above the level

of the plains. The plains are mostly under water during the rainy season, and their surface is thereby converted into a deep heavy mud, that is difficult to march through, and which appeared to us to be peculiarly injurious to boots or shoes made of leather; at other seasons, the plains are cultivated to grow rice, or, as it is called in India, "Paddy."

The province of Dalla, lying between Rangoon and Bassein, is an alluvial plain, through which the different mouths of the Irrawaddy discharge themselves into the sea. It is, in fact, the Delta of the Irrawaddy, and, like the deltas of other large rivers, it is intersected by numerous creeks, called, in the country, Nullas. These "nullas" being known to the Burmans, afforded them the means of passing and repassing in their war-boats and numerous canoes, some of which were large, with reinforcements; whilst they restrained the movements of the British troops.

The province of Dalla is considered the most fruitful in the Burmese empire, and is the granary whence the capital and upper provinces draw their principal supplies; large quantities of grain being transported annually, at the commencement of the S.W. monsoon, up the Irrawaddy, in river vessels of from twenty to forty tons each. Numerous buildings, having the appearance of villages, are occasionally to be met with on the banks of the river and nullas, consisting entirely of granaries, in which the revenue is collected in kind, and kept under a

guard until the season arrives for transporting it. At the commencement of the war, it was of importance to cut off these supplies, which was in a great measure effected by the capture of Rangoon, about a hundred river vessels being found in dry docks, cut out of the banks of the river and neighbouring nullas, laden with the grain of the preceding harvest; and some of which were ready for commencing their voyage. The grain was, of course, applied to the use of the British forces. Besides grain, the country round Rangoon produces a variety of good vegetables and fruits, amongst which pine-apples grow wild in the jungles. On carrying a stockade, one of our first operations, after driving out the enemy, was usually to look out for their stock of pine-apples.

Numerous half-wild water buffaloes were seen on the neighbouring plains, but they could not be caught alive, and, when shot, it was difficult to transport them; moreover, nothing less than a party could go out to forage, as the Burmans were always on the look-out, to cut off stragglers. The domestic cattle were driven away by the enemy, and many of the sick and wounded died in the hospitals, from the want of fresh provisions. There were said to be wild deer, which the Burmese shoot; and monkeys and tigers, similar to those of Bengal, were in the jungles, especially that of Siriam, in passing through which we traced their footsteps. The rivers and tanks abounded with fish, and were in-

fested by alligators. The horses of Pegue, though small, are esteemed for their strength and spirit. Large-sized straight teak timber in great quantities is floated down to Rangoon, from forests on the banks of the Irrawaddy: in time of peace, it is one of their most valuable exports, and, during war, was used in erecting stockades. Various kinds of rosin are produced; and, petroleum, a naptha, or earth oil, which was used by the enemy for their fire-rafts.

All plants grow with amazing rapidity during the rainy season. The 'paddy,' or rice, is said to be darker, but richer, and affording more nourishment, than that grown in Hindostan. It would not keep long, out of the husk. Bamboos grow to an immense size, some near a foot in diameter, and afford the Burmans a most ready and effective means of raising fortifications, houses, &c. The climate is not so hot as that of Bengal, but is subject to deleterious fevers.

The town or city of Rangoon, which I believe signifies the 'city of victory,' is said to have been built by Alompra, the founder of the present dynasty, and of the Burman empire. Report states it to have been the post from which he carried on his operations against the Peguers, after having driven their viceroy out of Ava, the former Burman capital. On his conquest of Pegue, he established Rangoon, and built the great 'Shoe Dagon,' the 'Golden Dagon,' Pagoda.

The capture of Alompra's city of victory, by the

British forces, was a mortal blow to the pride of the Burmans, who spared no exertions to drive us out ; so that the greatest energy they displayed was probably in the first affairs, perhaps when Bandoolla made his attack, as they are said to have lost confidence afterwards. Rangoon stands on the left (the right going up) bank of that branch of the Irrawaddy which joins the Pegue river, about twenty miles from the sea ; when taken by us, it was surrounded with a stockade of teak timbers, as strong, or stronger, than the timbers of a first-rate line-of-battle ship, placed vertically, and close together, and I think about sixteen feet high : other timbers were placed lengthways as a security, with inclined supports from the inside ; but there were no other works or embankments, excepting at the different gates, where there were small towers inside, some of brick-work, others of wood.

The shape of the town was much of a parallelogram, the length extending along, and almost close to, the river's bank ; on the other sides was a very broad fosse, filled with stagnant water and mud. Outside the stockade were several wharfs, the principal of which was the king's wharf, in front of the principal gate ; it was protected by a battery, where they had mounted the guns belonging to a small frigate that was building for the Imaun of Muscat. Higher up the river than the king's wharf, was another, where some guns were mounted, and which was named the Chinese wharf, from the people who

lived near it. The Chinese houses were outside the stockade.

The appearance of Rangoon, when first visited by us, was not prepossessing, although it was far from dirty. The streets run at right angles; and the houses, with the exception of some belonging to Europeans, and some of the public buildings—as, for instance, the custom-house, which was of brick—were built of wood and bamboos, raised on piles, and thatched. It was said, that the emperor did not chuse his subjects to live in more substantial buildings, lest they should convert them into castles; but the moisture of the climate was a great objection to brick or stone houses, for, if wet got into the walls, they soon went to decay, and fell; one of the principal buildings gave way, from this cause, whilst I was at Rangoon. The streets were paved with bricks placed on their edges, and two roads, paved in a similar manner, led from the town to the great pagoda, which was between two and three miles distant. Along these roads the British lines were placed. Numerous pigs had been kept as scavengers at Rangoon, but in consequence of the scarcity of provisions their numbers soon decreased. There were also great numbers of Piar dogs, of which the Burmans are fond, but which remaining after their masters had gone, and being inclined to bark and bite at the heels of the new comers, were uncereemoniously killed and thrown into the river.

The trade of Rangoon, previous to the breaking

out of the war, was carried on principally by a few Europeans and some Chinese. The exports were said to consist of ships built to order, teak timber, petroleum or earth oil, damma and stick lack two kinds of rosin, used I believe in varnishes or japan work, and a few Pegue horses. They received from us some India manufactures and large dogs; and crockery-ware from the Chinese. They took arms wherever they could get them, and on the arrival of any ship, the arms were taken out of her, and placed in the custom-house until all port dues, &c. were paid: laterly, vessels trading there were reported to have made a practice of carrying arms that were not expensive, and leaving them, whereby the port dues were paid at a cheaper rate, and the Burmans were satisfied with the use they intended to make of them. Some arms stamped, and of English manufacture, were found in the custom-house. When we arrived, a small frigate of five or six hundred tons burthen was on the stocks, building for the Imaun of Muscat. A merchant-ship had been launched, and was fitting out; and two brigs, and some Chinese junks, were lying in the river as traders. The Chinese who were at Rangoon were said to have been taken by the Burmans during one of their wars, and were detained to work, and to increase the population. They were amongst the greatest rogues in existence. Plunder being prohibited to the British forces, the Chinese carried off every thing in the Burmans' absence.

Their houses were full of all kinds of commodities, and I believe they were the only people who had abundance.

The appearance and character of the Burmans, the miscomprehension of which has probably been a principal cause of various misunderstandings relative to the war, resembles that of the Tartars, or more properly the Mongols, rather than the Hindoos. The Burman, though not generally tall, is athletic, active, and cheerful; his step is firm and elastic, his carriage erect; and, although the government is in all its grades a most absolute despotism, his expression is that of independence, if not of defiance. They are said to be fond of boxing! Sober, energetic, and certainly not generally deficient in spirit, the Burman character is alloyed by cruelty in war; cunning and insolence to those below them; whilst they appeared, in some instances, to be entirely ignorant of a sense of gratitude or principle, attempting to destroy those by whom their lives had been saved! This might, however, have proceeded from misconception on their part; and there were instances to the contrary, of whom I think my friend Koo was one.

The Burman mode of warfare appears to consist rather in starving their enemies, by surrounding them with circular lines of detached stockades, the area of which they gradually diminish, so as to cut them off, than in fighting battles in the field. They are extremely expert in building stockades,

one capable of containing several thousand men being thrown up in a few days, and smaller ones in less time.

Their religion is a modification of that of the Hindoos, they worship Brahma under the name of Guadma. They do not kill domestic animals; but if any other person will kill, they do not object to eat them: and they are fond of hunting wild animals, especially deer, which they shoot with matchlocks,—unlike the Hindoos, who will not eat what an European touches, the Burman says, that what is good for the European is good for him, and is always desirous to share.

The Burman emperor is absolute, and is the proprietor of all the land in his dominions, making occasional grant to his chiefs for life. The chiefs appear to be, in their turn, despotic, and to have the power of life or death over those below them. The symbols of rank consist, principally, of gold chains and gilt umbrellas; and in the formation of their houses, which must be of a particular shape, according to the order the owner is entitled to.

There is not much distinction in dress, the warmth of the climate requiring little to be worn. A checked cotton is manufactured by them, some of the patterns of which are not much unlike the Scotch plaids. One of these cottons is usually thrown over the shoulders, and another worn round the waist and between the legs. The Burmans have a peculiar mode of twisting their hair, which is long

and black, into a knot on one side, and towards the front of the head. Their arms consist of spears, swords, matchlocks, muskets, jingals, and a variety of great guns or artillery.

During the war, the muskets and matchlocks were given to deer-shooters, who took deadly aim with a rest, but were not so good when moving. The jingals were rusty iron tubes, that would carry from a pound to a pound and a half shot. A European would scarcely have ventured to fire one, lest it should burst; but the Burmans would plant them on the walls of stockades, or along roads, and fire them, loaded nearly to the muzzle, with all kinds of pieces of iron, &c., and many of our men were knocked down by them. Their artillery was, upon the whole, inferior, although they had several brass guns. They sometimes made very tolerable practice, and I have seen their shots reach where ours would not.

The Burmese war-boats were described by Captain Cox as the most respectable part of the Burman emperor's force, and he informs us, that, at the time he visited Ava, the emperor could muster from two to three hundred of them. Their dimensions vary, but those most commonly used pulled about fifty oars; their breadth was about a tenth part of their length, and they draw only a few inches water. Their rate of pulling was very fast—faster than any European boat. Contrary to our custom, the post of honour, or part for accommodation,

was the stem, which was solid for several feet in length, and as broad as any part of the boat. On this sat the chief, surrounded by his attendants; or here a gun was mounted for action. The sterns curved, and rose to a considerable height, terminated by small battens nailed across, so as, in some measure, to represent the wings of a bird. This elevated stern was probably intended not merely as an ornament, but to protect the crew when obliged to retreat. The bottoms of the war-boats were generally formed of the trunks of the largest teak trees, and the upper works made of stout planks, each of which was the length from where they joined the stem to the rising curvature of the stern; above the gunnel there was frequently a wash streak inclining outwards; and over this wash streak were the ends of tholes for the oars, each thole terminating in a ball or knob, and the oars put through becketts. Thwarts were fixed at proper distances, but the crew sat rather sideways on the gunnel, and pulled with a timed stroke. The oars were short, with a broad blade, somewhat like paddles.

The models of the war-boats were excellent for the purposes for which they were intended, and, when gilt, they had a splendid appearance. The dimensions of the gilt one taken at Siriam were,—extreme length, 82 feet; breadth, 7 feet 6 inches; pulling 54 oars.

There was an old war-boat hauled up near the Great Pagoda at Rangoon, which was said to have

been consecrated, in consequence of having come from the capital, a distance of between four and five hundred miles, in forty-eight hours. The story told was, that she had been despatched to inform the Burmans in Rangoon, who were then besieged by the Peguers, that reinforcements were coming, and to induce them to hold out, which they did.

The Burmans have numerous canoes, some of which are almost as large as war-boats. There were also some state vessels, being ornamented houses, built upon war-boats, and which, for spaciousness of accommodation and facility of movement on rivers, surpassed any others I ever saw, even the Lord Mayor's barge.

The Burmese stockades, respecting which so much has been said, whilst so little appears generally to be known, varied from little more than breastworks to fortifications fifteen feet high, and which our shot frequently could not breach.

When a bamboo stockade was to be erected, the space intended to be enclosed was marked out, and a small trench dug, in which bamboos, eight to ten inches in diameter, and nine or ten feet high, were placed vertically, and close together. The small trench was then filled up, and the bamboo work strengthened by lashing others that were split, and placed lengthways to those that were vertical. Outside of this row more bamboos, as stout as could be got, were placed upright in a similar manner, excepting that, instead of a continued close line, about

three were placed together, a space, which would have admitted three more, left, and again three others placed, and so proceeding along, or round the works. The vacant spaces in the higher row, thus forming port holes above the lower row, through which the garrison could fire, standing under cover of the higher bamboos. On the top of the higher bamboos, some that were slightly split were placed lengthways over the vertical ends, and the whole additionally secured by lashings and inclined supports from the inside.

When the bamboo work was finished, or rather, perhaps, whilst it was going on, for the Burmans were not people who lost time on such occasions, a broad deep trench was dug a few feet inside of the wall, and the earth thrown up, so as to form an embankment against the wall, generally in the shape of two high steps or small terraces; the upper part of this embankment was usually five or six feet high, and it formed not only effective shelter against artillery, but was the platform on which the jingals and great guns were mounted, and on which the musqueteers or matchlock-men stood, to fire as the British troops advanced. Barracks, built of the smaller parts of bamboos, and thatched with their leaves, were built round the stockade inside the trench, so that the men lived at their posts. A Pagoda was frequently enclosed, and the Burman engineers generally took care to have a jungle in the rear of their positions, so as to cover a retreat,

which was easily effected by means of the embankment on the inside, although it was not so easy for the British forces to get in from the outside. Heavy pieces of timber—trunks of trees—were frequently suspended from the top of the works, in order to be cut away upon assailants in attempts to storm :—rows of posts and rails, and abattis, were placed outside.

The most formidable fire-rafts I saw, were those sent down on the cruisers and gun-brig when in advance. Pieces of timber and bamboos were placed across each other, much in the manner that planks are usually packed in timber-yards, forming squares of ten or twelve feet each. On these squares or platforms, piles of firewood were laid, and jars of petroleum, or naptha, fixed, with other combustibles. Several squares, perhaps twenty, were lashed loosely together, one before another, in a line; and the lashings being under water would not burn, whilst they acted as hinges for the whole to work upon. Large canoes, and on other occasions river vessels, filled with combustibles, being attached to the rafts, not only added to the probable effects by fire, but, from their weight and the power of the current acting upon them, there was a chance of the vessels they might have caught, drifting from their anchors, and thus tending to the destruction of others by becoming themselves fire-rafts.

I have mentioned the error we at first committed in checking the lower end; and the tide swinging

the raft round into a crescent, may now be understood. The proper mode of managing the fire-rafts, was to steer them, by giving way on the boats, so as keep them end on.

Origin of the Burmans.

I have stated that 'The appearance and character of the Burmans resembles that of the Tartars, or more properly the Mongols, rather than the Hindoos.' Such an observation may have startled the reader, in like manner as the fact of the Burmans being so, surprised most of those employed on the expedition. As, however, such is the case, I will, without either asserting the correctness of my opinion, or calling upon my reader to accord, state the opinion which my acquaintance with the geography of Asia, and knowledge of some of its inhabitants, enables me to form, relative to the origin of these—I think they may be called—remarkable people.

The range of authentic history, limited as it is, shews that the northern hordes of Europe have, at different periods broken in, upon the more civilized and richer provinces; whilst our acquaintance with Asia in modern ages has informed us, that very similar proceedings have been effected in China and other regions. Hindostan, indeed, appears to be about the only country which has not been thus overwhelmed; and even there the British government has succeeded to a 'Mogul empire.'

By the 'Mongols,' I do not mean any particular tribe, inhabiting any particular district; but, that vast family of the human race who, nurtured in the elevated regions of central Asia, have, judging from physical and other characteristics, extended their ramifications in various directions towards the Eastern Seas, and who appear now to be entering Europe through Russia!

But, it may be asked, if this idea be just, and if the Mongol, or the neighbouring Burman, be more energetic, or more physically powerful than the Hindoo, how is it that Hindostan has not long since been peopled by them?

The vast chain of the Himalah, that runs along the north of Hindostan, forms not merely a physical, but a moral barrier; for its elevated regions being rather ascending plains, than narrow mountain ranges, like the Andes, are inhabited by tribes who possess more physical strength, and more moral energy, than their more numerous southern kindred; whilst the country to the north is such, that invading hordes of sufficient force for the conquest of such tribes, would not be enabled to obtain subsistence. Wherever this barrier has sunk, as to the eastward of Bengal, and to the north of the Burman empire, towards China; or, wherever rivers have opened passages, as the Burampooter, or the two rivers forming the Irrawaddy, which run directly from the great central region towards the south, there have this Mongolian family from time to time

poured in to overwhelm the more southern countries.

Further: whenever this same race have been enabled to outflank the Himaleh to the westward, they have come in upon Hindostan through the Punjab, though not in equal numbers. I do not, however, mean to say, that the Burmans, even supposing them to belong to this family, are either to be successful in an attack upon Hindostan from the East, or that they have recently arrived in their present position. The bay of Bengal stretching north towards the range of the Himaleh, the Ganges running down from it, and, in an inferior degree, the Mug mountains on the east, are all obstacles to their inroads. Moreover, I think that not only the Burmans, but the Siamese and Malays, are each of them descendants of Mongolian tribes, who have at different periods come down and driven their brethren gradually south towards the sea: a process which is, or at least has been, going on in the present age: for, just previous to the breaking out of the Burmese war, the Malay king of Queda was driven from his territory by the Siamese, to seek the protection of the British government at Penang; whilst the inroads of the Burmans upon the Siamese are well known to persons acquainted with those regions.

Had it not been for the existence of the Himaleh, I think Hindostan would not have remained exonerated from Mongolian hordes; and were the Madras frontier joined by the Burman empire, instead of being bounded, as it now is, by the bay of Bengal,

I question whether it would be possible to prevent the inroads of the Burmans. Further; I think it not absurd to refer the cause of the late war to that desire of extension and thirst for conquest, which has in numerous, if not in all, ages marked the history of this race.

On leaving India, I received letters from Sir Archibald Campbell's family to some of his friends at home, on delivering which I was questioned somewhat anxiously as to the state of affairs when I left, and as to the probable results of the Burmese war. After I had given such an account as the circumstances I was acquainted with enabled me, one of the numbers of the *Oriental Herald* was handed to me, with a request that I would read it, and then state whether the account it gave of some of the operations of the war was correct or incorrect?—true or untrue? This, however, was not an easy question to answer, inasmuch as there were several truths mixed up with statements which, though probably not intentional untruths, were not true; and the impression produced by the whole was very far from correct. As far as I can recollect, for I cannot at this moment meet with the number of the journal, the editor had stated, 'that the Burmans being taken by surprise at Rangoon, there was not sufficient force in the neighbourhood to oppose the progress of the British troops; and that, had they at once pushed on, they might have captured sufficient

boats to have transported the army and its equipage.'

Now it so happened, that when Rangoon was taken, the late Commodore Grant ordered me to go round and examine all the vessels in the river or ports of the town, of which I had to make a report to him; and being afterwards appointed naval aide-de-camp to the general, I knew, from personal examination, that there were between sixty and seventy of the large river vessels captured at Rangoon, which were afterwards increased in number to about a hundred, by others taken in the neighbouring creeks; there were, moreover, numerous canoes, some of which were large. But these not being "steam-vessels," and we not having people to manage them, they could not be used to transport the army.

Had it, however, been otherwise, the difficulty of supplying and supporting the troops, even whilst the communication was open to the shipping, was such, that had they in the first instance moved beyond the range of where the shipping could proceed, it would have been almost, if not altogether, impossible to have supplied them; whilst from the numerous attempts made by the enemy to attack and cut off—had the British forces been weakened by dividing them, or been more exposed to the climate and the enemy, from being posted in a less advantageous position—they could scarcely have held

their ground. The termination of the rainy season, when the enemy had lost confidence in themselves from having been repeatedly beaten; and when the more peaceable inhabitants, finding that the British forces were successful in action, but were not at other times cruel, became inclined to assist them, was undoubtedly the time to advance.

Mr. Buckingham was not, however, the only person who was mistaken in his opinions as to the mode of proceeding in the operations of this war. Several of the daily journals were also in error; and amongst the numerous persons with whom I conversed on the subject, several of whom were of high rank and military experience, I was surprised to find how little was known as to the true state of affairs, and how few appeared to understand what was really going on at that time in India.

Besides the degree of credit granted, or due to the different forces, there has, I believe, been further disagreement on the subject of batta, extra pay, or prize money.

On this subject I can say nothing further, than that I believe every British soldier and sailor employed in the Burmese war merited every degree of credit his king and country could grant, or remuneration the India Company can bestow. It can scarcely be intended, as I have indeed heard it has been, that the gallant little band of seamen employed on this occasion should be placed on an inferior footing to their brethren of the army, merely

because the smallness of their number gave them further difficulties to encounter. In the earlier operations I was a witness to their struggles ; and no one has yet presumed to doubt the exertions of Captain Chads, his officers, and men.

Without intending disrespect to any in authority, I claim the privilege of thus speaking of those in the profession to which I have the honour to belong, having been myself employed in doing duty with the army. Personally, I can state, that not choosing to afford ground for unjust reports, which even an unimportant individual like myself could not altogether escape, I declined accepting the aide-de-camp's pay that was offered to me, and left Rangoon without having received any thing but a desperate wound. On my return, the promotion the late Commodore Grant had foretold, was given me, and I had the satisfaction of receiving my first commission, or the official letter announcing it, on that quarter-deck where Nelson fell !

H. LISTER MAW.

ON A RUSSIAN INVASION OF BRITISH INDIA.

MUCH has, at different times, been said of the possibility or probability of a Russian invasion of Hindostan. The preceding Memoir was scarcely written when an extract from the "Moscow Gazette," of December 27, 1831, was published in the "Morning Chronicle," announcing that "the Russian *nation* is indignant at the part which England has taken in the troubles of Poland," that "its (*our*) turn must come, and then we shall *make no treaty with that people except at Calcutta!!!*" Happily, however, for us, and for the civilized world at large, such assertions are easier made than their threats can be realized.

It is true, the more hardy tribes of northern and central Asia have at several periods overrun Hindostan, and compelled the Hindoos to acknowledge their authority over various provinces; still they have not been enabled to locate their hordes in this, as in other regions; and their authority, though extensive, has been uncertain, both as to time and extent of territory.

The inroads of Mahmoud, Zengis Khan, and Timour, afford sufficient proofs that the Hindoos were of themselves no match for the more hardy and

energetic Mongols; but the case is no longer the same, inasmuch as, were those inroads to be attempted now, the Mongols would find not merely Hindoos, but British forces, to encounter.

It is remarkable, although it might appear somewhat speculative here to shew, how natural causes produce natural effects, even in the invasion of empires. Mountains and elevated and sterile regions have formed barriers; and the courses of rivers have opened passages which have checked or facilitated the progress of conquerors. In ruder stages of society, rivers might be *descended* with comparative ease; but their streams could not so well be *ascended*, especially for military purposes, until the invention and application of steam. We, however, possess this power, and thus a new means is afforded of resisting invasion; for, the Ganges leading towards, and the Indus flowing through, the Punjab, the point whence such attack has hitherto proceeded, and is now threatened, resources may be conveyed to the scene of action by steam flotillas.

Calculations have been entered into to shew, that the Russians, on the Caspian, are not farther from certain positions in the Punjab, than the British forces are at Calcutta. If the object were the conquest of those positions, such calculations would not even then be correct, inasmuch as Calcutta is about the extreme distant point of our position, whilst the Caspian is the advanced position of Russia; and, although the Oxus might certainly

afford comparative facility of transport to the Russians over the means they could obtain did that river not exist, they are not likely soon to establish a steam communication upon it, nor to possess those resources on its banks which the British government already possesses on the Ganges.

Admitting the independent tribes of the mountainous regions on the north-west of India, who are more warlike than the southern Hindoos, to be equally well disposed to the Russian as to the British government, which, unless the Indian government is negligent, is fully as much as ought to be assumed; if the Russians would invade India, they must commence by a conquest of these tribes, whilst our object should be to maintain their independence.

It may, however, be said, for it has been said, that these tribes would join the Russians to plunder India. Do they then intend to yield their territories to Russia after India be plundered, supposing such an event possible? for, unless Russia kept possession of these countries, her communication with India would be cut off as soon as gained, and in case of a reverse, with these countries in their rear, what would become of the invaders?

Every step the Russians advanced, their line of communication would be lengthened, and the difficulty of support proportionally increased, whilst the resources of the British force would be concentrated.

Further.—The Autocrat may yet learn, that even arbitrary government cannot control more than a certain extent of regions influenced by various interests and possessing various degrees of civilization. Tippoo Saib is said to have remarked, that ‘ he did not fear the British forces he could see,’ but, ‘ those he could not see.’ Whilst Great Britain commands the coasts of India, and her steam flotillas can navigate its rivers, invaders must beware. When Peter the Great established Russia as a maritime power, he at the same time exposed her to a maritime attack; and, *if the Russians think of going to Calcutta, we may think of visiting St. Petersburg.*

THE END.

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